



**INDIAN HISTORICAL RECORDS COMMISSION**

**PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
MEETINGS**

**VOL. III**

**THIRD MEETING HELD AT BOMBAY**

***JANUARY 1921***



CALCUTTA  
SUPERINTENDENT GOVERNMENT PRINTING, INDIA  
1921

***Price Re. 1 per copy.***

# Agents for the Sale of Books Published by the Superintendent of Government Printing, India, Calcutta.

## IN EUROPE.

Constable & Co., 10, Orange Street, Leicester Square, London, W.C.  
Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 68-74, Carter Lane, E.C., and 39, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.  
Bernard Quaritch, 11, Grafton Street, New Bond Street, London, W.  
P. S. King & Sons, 2 & 4, Great Smith Street, Westminster, London, S.W.  
H. S. King & Co., 65, Cornhill, E.C., and 9, Pall Mall, London, W.  
Grindlay & Co., 54, Parliament Street, London, S.W.  
Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.

W. Thacker & Co., 2, Creed Lane, London, E.C.  
T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., 1, Adelphi Terrace, London, W.C.  
Weldon & Wesley, Ltd., 28, Essex St., London, W. C.  
B. H. Blackwell, 50 & 51, Broad Street, Oxford.  
Deighton Bell & Co., Ltd., Cambridge.  
Oliver and Boyd, Tweeddale Court, Edinburgh.  
E. Ponsonby, Ltd., 116, Grafton Street, Dublin.  
Ernest Leroux, 28, Rue Bonaparte, Paris.  
Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, Holland.

## IN INDIA AND CEYLON.

Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta and Simla.  
Newman & Co., Calcutta.  
R. Cambray & Co., Calcutta.  
S. K. Lahiri & Co., Calcutta.  
B. Banerjee & Co., Calcutta.  
The Indian School Supply Depot, 309, Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta, and 226, Nawabpur, Dacca.  
Butterworth & Co. (India), Ltd., Calcutta.  
Rai M. C. Sarecar Bahadur and Sons, 80-2A, Harrison Road, Calcutta.  
The Weldon Library, 57, Park Street, West, Calcutta.  
Standard Literature Co., Ltd., Calcutta.  
Lal Chand & Sons, Calcutta.  
The Association Press, Calcutta.  
Rigginbotham & Co., Madras.  
V. Kalyanarama Iyer & Co., Madras.  
G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.  
S. Murthy & Co., Madras.  
Thompson & Co., Madras.  
Temple & Co., Madras.  
P. R. Rama Iyer & Co., Madras.  
Vas & Co., Madras.  
E. M. Gopalakrishna Kone, Madras.  
Thacker & Co., Ltd., Bombay.  
D. B. Taraporevala, Sons & Co., Bombay.  
Mrs. Radhabai Atmaram Sagoon, Bombay.  
Sunder Pandurang, Bombay.  
Gopal Narayan & Co., Bombay.  
Ram Chandra Gorind & Son, Kalbadevi, Bombay.

Proprietor, New Kitabkhana, Poona.  
The Standard Bookstall, Karachi.  
Mangaldas Harkisandas, Surat.  
Karsandas Narandas & Sons, Surat.  
A. H. Wheeler & Co., Allahabad, Calcutta and Bombay.  
N. B. Mathur, Supt., Nazim Kanun Hind Press, Allahabad.  
Munshi Seeta Ram, Managing Proprietor, Indian Army Book Depot, Juhl, Cawnpur.  
Rai Sahib M. Gulab Singh & Sons, Mufid-i-Am Press, Lahore and Allahabad.  
Rama Krishna & Sons, Lahore.  
Supt., American Baptist Mission Press, Rangoon.  
Manager, the "Hitavada," Nagpur.  
S. C. Talukdar, Proprietor, Students & Co., Cooch Behar.  
A. M. & J. Ferguson, Ceylon.  
Manager, Educational Book Depots, Nagpur and Jubbulpore.\*  
Manager of the Imperial Book Depot, 63, Chandney Chauk Street, Delhi.\*  
Manager, "The Agra Medical Hall and Co-operative Association, Ltd." (Successors to A. John & Co., Agra).  
Supt., Basel Mission Book and Tract Depository, Mangalore.\*  
P. Varadachary & Co., Madras.\*  
Ram Dayal Agarwala, 184, Katra, Allahabad.\*  
D. C. Anand & Sons, Peshawar.\*  
Manager, Newal Kishore Press, Lucknow.\*  
Maung Lu Gale, Proprietor, Law Book Depot, Mandalay.\*

\* Agents for the sale of Legislative-Department publications only.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Proceedings of the Public meeting—	
Members of the Commission and others present . . . . .	1
Speech of His Excellency Sir George Lloyd, Governor of Bombay . . . . .	1
Paper by Professor Jadunath Sarkar—	
Delhi during the Anarchy, 1749-1788, as told in the contemporary records . . . . .	4
Discourse on Sher Shah by Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams . . . . .	9
Paper by the Ven. W. K. Firminger—	
Bengal and Bihar District Records, 1760-1790 : their Historical Value and Methods of Preservation . . . . .	10
Paper by Moulavi Zafar Hasan, Assistant Superintendent of Archæology—	
Letter of condolence on the death of the Emperor Shahjahan from Aurangzeb to Jahanara Begam and her reply . . . . .	18
Paper by Mr H. G. Rawlinson, Principal, Karnatak College, Dharwar—	
Life in an English Factory in India in the Seventeenth Century . . . . .	24
Paper by Mr M. S. Commissariat, Professor, Gujarat College, Ahmadabad—	
Political and economic condition of Gujarat during the Seventeenth Century . . . . .	35
Paper by Rao Bahadur D. B. Parasnis of Satara—	
A note on Marathi Historical Records and their Publication . . . . .	51
Proceedings of the Members' meeting . . . . .	61



# Proceedings of the Third Meeting of the Indian Historical Records Commission held at Bombay in January 1921.

*The Third meeting of the Indian Historical Records Commission was held in the Cowasjee Jehangir Hall on the 4th and 5th January 1921. The following members were present :*

Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams, M.A., B. LITT. (Oxon.), O.B.E.,  
Professor Jadunath Sarkar, M.A., I.E.S., Bihar and Orissa,  
The Ven. Archdeacon W. K. Firminger, D.D., B.LITT., Calcutta,  
Mr H. Dodwell, M.A., Curator, Madras Record Office,  
Mr P. Dias, Keeper of Records, Bengal,  
Mr B. K. Thakore, B.A., Professor of History, Deccan College, Poona,  
Mr J. M. Mitra, M.A., Rai Bahadur, Keeper of the Records of the Government of India (Secretary).

The following co-opted members were also present :

Rai Bahadur B. A. Gupte, F.Z.S., Curator of the Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta,

Mr R. K. Ranadive, M.A.,  
Mr G. S. Sardesai, B.A., } representing the Baroda State,

Mr Datto Vaman Potdar, B.A., of the Itihasa Mandala of Poona was present by special invitation.

In the absence of the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams presided.

His Excellency Sir George Lloyd, who was to have opened the meeting, was unavoidably absent and in his absence the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay read out the following speech :

## Speech of His Excellency Sir George Lloyd.

It gives me much pleasure to welcome the Indian Historical Records Commission on this their first visit to Bombay and I hope that your proceedings on this occasion will be no less successful and profitable than your previous meetings, if I may judge from the very interesting reports which have been published of your proceedings in Simla and Lahore.

I see that you have a long and interesting programme before you for discussion during the next two days and we in Bombay shall be especially interested in Rao Bahadur Parasnis' promised paper on the subject of Marathi Historical Records. I shall have a few words to say about our Marathi records later on; but in the meanwhile, I would observe that although You have not previously visited

Bombay you have already taken steps to give us the benefit of your advice. In fact Bombay enjoys the distinction of being the subject of the first resolution passed at the very first meeting of your Commission. The subject to which you then referred was the appointment of a whole-time officer to take charge of the Central Records Office at Bombay. Well, that proposal has not yet materialised, but I would not have you think that we have been doing nothing or taking no interest in our own records which, as you are no doubt aware, contain some very ancient documents beginning as early as the year 1630.

Our first Record Office in fact began in 1821 exactly a hundred years ago and your meeting here during the present year thus signalizes a centenary of which you were perhaps not aware when you decided on holding your present meeting at Bombay. Since 1821 the records had been moved twice, but in their present form they have the advantage of a considerable amount of concentration, a circumstance which will no doubt facilitate their study. Our Bombay Record Office contains not only the Bombay Presidency records, but the Surat Presidency and Surat Factory records before them. Many of these older records are somewhat quaint in character and in particular exhibit the fiction that all matters with which the papers dealt have been read or approved at a personal consultation between the officers concerned. This fiction was ended in 1820 and from that time onwards the papers were filed practically as they are now, being separated more or less according to subjects instead of being grouped round particular Council meetings, real or imaginary.

However, to return to what we have been doing, no calendars have been prepared in this Presidency, which is perhaps a fortunate circumstance seeing that this form of editing has now been officially repudiated. Press-lists have, however, been made covering the years 1646 to 1760 and their compilation has only recently been stopped under instructions from the Government of India. It will be for you no doubt to advise us as to the future course to be pursued and I will therefore not attempt to state at the present moment exactly what we propose to do; but I would draw your attention to the fact that a descriptive handbook of our Bombay and Poona records has already been compiled by Mr Kindersley and but for the unfortunate pressure of work at the Central Press would have been in print and available for your reference now. I think it will be found that this handbook will be of great assistance to any one wishing to study our records. At the same time students of history already have in an accessible form a considerable amount of matter extracted from our various record rooms. The Bombay records were first examined and listed as long ago as 1863 by Major Thomas Candy, but the principal source of reference is, of course, Sir George Forrest's Selections which I believe, although I have not studied them, so far represent the most important material contained in our records that it is at present somewhat doubtful what work would remain to be done by a whole-time record officer, if he were appointed. Some of Sir George Forrest's Selections are interesting and picturesque, but generally speaking our records seem to contain less valuable material than might have been expected bearing on the history of the 18th Century, and historians have always

tended to derive their information from the various old books which exist about Bombay City, although our records supplied the material which was collected and published in 1894 by Sir James Campbell under the orders of Government. There is a certain amount of miscellaneous matter in our Bombay Record Office which may possibly repay investigation. We have stray portions of the original records of all the subsidiary factories in the area now comprised in the Bombay Presidency and of a number of records of out-stations in different parts of Asia, and we have also sundry miscellaneous records of old institutions and a few curious Dutch and Portuguese papers. Our main historical asset, however, is in Poona, where the Peshwa's Daftar will no doubt remain a perennial source of interest to students. You have already in the 9th resolution passed at your first meeting in 1919 made certain proposals as regards these Poona records and have enquired the views of the Bombay Government upon the proposal for a source book on Maratha history during the 17th and 18th Centuries and the possibility of obtaining pecuniary contributions towards the expenses of this publication. This matter is already under investigation and the Director of Public Instruction will possibly be able to give you information as to the probability of support from such institutions, as for instance, the Bharata Itihasa Sanshodhaka Mandala. I think it quite possible that if a whole-time officer were to be appointed his activities might more usefully be directed to work at Poona for the present as it is unlikely that he would be able to combine such investigations with any considerable amount of work in our Bombay record room. The Peshwa's Daftar is, however, not altogether untouched. The 35,000 odd bundles of papers of which these records consist have already been indexed and arranged for administrative purposes and I believe are suitably housed. A number of volumes of selections from these papers have been published by the Deccan Vernacular Society and Mr Justice Ranade has already surveyed this material from certain aspects in his introduction to this series of publications. We have every desire to facilitate access by the public both to the Daftar at Poona and to the Record Office at Bombay for purposes of *bona fide* study, and you will find that the handbook on our records which is about to be published commences with instructions to the public as to the manner in which this access may be obtained. It is seldom, however, that we meet with application to inspect our Bombay records and no doubt interest will continue to be concentrated mainly upon the materials at Poona. I hope and I have no doubt that the practice of making historical researches among the original records will develop very much as time goes on and you may be sure that the Bombay Government will do everything possible to encourage it.

- I will now leave you to your programme and I shall take great interest in hearing of your proceedings; and I hope that you will really be able to give us some guidance and advice as to the best method of treatment for the records with which we are entrusted.

---

Professor Rushbrook Williams speaking for the Commission briefly thanked His Excellency for the cordial welcome given to the Assembly by the Government



of Bombay. He referred to the interest and attraction of the records of Bombay from the point of view of the historian and expressed the hope that it would be possible for the Commission to assist the Government of Bombay in dealing with the study and publication of the contents of their record room.

---

The following papers were then read and discussion was invited on them :

### **Delhi during the Anarchy, 1749-1788, as told in contemporary records.**

(By Professor Jadunath Sarkar, M.A., I.E.S.)

The last Emperor of Delhi who in any way deserved that high title was Muhammad Shah. But, from his death in 1748 to the final establishment of Sindhia's authority at the Mughal capital in 1788, the city of Delhi was without a master. True, for the whole of this period, there was some one or other calling himself Padishah ; but he was never his own master, and still less the master of the provinces of the Empire. Even the city of Delhi, during his residence in it, was not under his control, but under that of his keeper, or divided between rivals fighting for the position of his keeper. In fact, so far as Delhi and its immediate neighbourhood were concerned, it was a period of *anarchy* or kinglessness,—the direct negation of government, because a government implies an orderly State and habitual obedience paid by the people to the orders of a sovereign.

These forty years form the saddest period in our history. It was a period marked by frequent bloody fights between rival nobles claiming the supreme control over the State, street brawls by soldiers mutinying for arrears of pay or between soldiers of different races who had quarrelled in the bazar. The Emperor was timid and imbecile, defeating the efforts of his best friends by listening to base flatterers and corrupt ministers of his pleasure, and vainly trying to recover his power by means of low and cowardly intrigue, such as creating a new *wazir* for an old one or setting up his commander-in-chief (*bakhshi*) against his chancellor (*wazir*) in the control of the imperial Court and the nominal army of the Empire. The heir of the mighty Timur had fallen very low indeed, when he could not think of achieving his own emancipation by manly exertion or a manlier death. Delhi history during these forty years is a sickening and monotonous tale of sack by Afghans and Marathas, Sikhs and Jats, even Gujars and Pindaris ; frequent panic among the citizens whenever any such attack was expected, the flight of the rich, the closing of the shops, the looting of the unprotected houses by the ruffians of the city population who took advantage of the public alarm and confusion : the utter spoliation of the peasantry and ruin of the surrounding villages by organized bands of brigands or soldiers out foraging, and consequent famine prices in the capital ; the incurable intrigue, inefficiency and moral decay of the imperial Court, culminating in the crowning agony of Ghulam Qadir's capture of the palace, outrage on the Emperor's family and blinding of Shah Alam II himself. The peasantry were so

exasperated by their sufferings and the failure of the State to protect their life and property that they naturally regarded all strangers and even the forces of the Crown as their enemies.

The history of Delhi during this period is known to us in broad outline, but not in detail. English readers will find it in Francklin's *History of Shah Alam*, Keene's *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, and, more briefly, in Grant Duff's *History of the Mahrattas*. But a modern student of history cannot rest satisfied unless he comes to the original and contemporary sources of information for his period. In our search for these sources, we may soon dismiss Francklin's authorities, namely, Munna Lal's history of the first thirteen years of Shah Alam's reign, Sayyid Razi Khan's history of the transactions of the last nine years, and Ghulam Ali Khan's *Shah Alam-namah*, because the first two are brief summaries and the last is the work of a man who wrote from a distance (the city of Lucknow) and without contemporary notes, diaries, or official records of the Court and city of Delhi.

Fakir Khair-ud-din's *Ibratnamah* is a voluminous history written by an influential official of Shah Alam's son and an eye-witness of many of the occurrences described in the work. The Imperial Record Office at Calcutta contains a number of Persian news-letters sent by the East India Company's agents and professional news-writers from Delhi and Lucknow, describing the occurrences of Upper India from time to time. These have been calendared up to 1772 only. But they do not supply a continuous record, nor full details. The despatches of the Maratha envoy at Delhi to his master at Poona, published by Rao Bahadur D. B. Parasnis, consist of 616 letters, but commencing from January 1780 only. Moreover, their writer was the representative of the dominant Power, and as such he was incapable of looking at events from the standpoint of the toad under the harrow stone, I mean the unhappy people of Delhi. Similarly, the Marathi letters given in Rajwade's *Sadhanen*, vols. 3 and 6, and the *Aitihāsik Patren Yadi Bagaire* of the *Bharatbarsha* deal with campaigns and diplomacy only. There has also survived in a Persian manuscript the daily bulletins of the Court of Shah Alam and the camp of Mahadji Sindhia for three months only, viz., 6th July to 7th October 1787. The French military adventurers, so many of whom figured in Delhi politics in that age, have left no detailed memoirs of the history which they helped to make, though the French race excels most in this class of composition. M. Jean Law's *Memoire*, ably edited by M. Alfred Martineau, deals with Bengal, Bihar and Bundelkhand only and stops in January 1761. Benoit De Boigne's *Memoire*, published at his Swiss home, Chambery, (second edition in 1830), is a very small and disappointing book, absolutely wanting in accurate information of the kind that we seek. No other French commander in Upper India has given us his autobiography.

Happily, among the papers of an old aristocratic family of Patna I have discovered a unique copy of a Persian manuscript which may be styled the *Delhi Chronicle during the Anarchy*. After the fall of Mir Qasim and the defeat of the Nawab of Oudh at Buxar (1763) had finally established British peace over Bengal and Bihar, many noble families began to flee from the horrors of the anarchy at Delhi and settle in Bihar where they could find the same language, climate, manner

of life and social system as at Delhi, but infinitely greater security of life and property. One of these families had kept a diary, giving the dates in the Hindu, Hijera and Old Persian (or Ilahi) eras, with brief records of the occurrences. Many leaves of the manuscript have been lost, but what remains covers the years 1739 to 1799, that is, from Nadir Shah's sack of Delhi to the eve of the British entry into the imperial city under Lord Lake. There are many gaps in the work as it now stands, but it is of priceless importance and constitutes a record of supreme value to the critical historian of this period. Here we have an absolutely contemporary chronicle of the events and rumours of Delhi, written down immediately afterwards by an inhabitant of the city, without any embellishment, garbling or artificial arrangement of a later date.

While studying it, I have often been tempted to liken it to the old *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* during the Danish incursions. The artless truthfulness, the plain terse statement of fact, the exclusion of emotion or comment, and the accuracy of record, are the same in both works. A few typical extracts will give you an idea of its contents.

We frequently read of envoys being sent by the Delhi Court or nobles to the raiders, or by the garrison of a besieged fort to their invaders, to negotiate for ransom. The word used is *sawāl jawāb*, which is corrupted in Marathi into *sālzāb*, and literally means 'question and answer,' i.e., higgling for terms. These embassies sometimes ended in aggravation of the quarrel and even the exchange of blows.

The *Ibratnamah* gives a harrowing picture of the sack of the village of Mitraul by the Shahzada after it had defied his forces. The author was an eye-witness of the scene. In Delhi itself the situation was hardly better. The Fort or walled city suffered less often, but the Old City (*shahar-i-kuhna*) was no safer than the villages around.

From the ramparts of Delhi and the sandy beach (*reti*) of the Jamuna, the citizens sometimes gazed on the spectacle of battles going on on the other bank between rivals for the mastery of the city. The *tamasha* was not always a safe one, as cannon-balls sometimes crossed the river and fell inside the Fort.

We frequently have entries like this : 'To-day the floor of such a nobleman's house was dug up, and next day that of another noble.' This was done in search of buried treasure.

1753. 14th March, at night there was a tumult in the Fort ; 17th March, there was a tumult in the daytime.

6th May, the Jats and other people plunder the inhabitants of the old city in the neighbourhood of the Lal Darwaza at the instigation of Safdar Jang.

12th June, the robe of *wazir* was conferred on Intizam-ud-daula, who replaced Safdar Jang dismissed ; for one *prahar* and a half a tumult raged, and the Jats and other classes looted the old city.

Fight between Safdar Jang and the Bakhshi-ul-mulk ; Faridabad looted,

1754, 4th June. A rumour spread that the Emperor was being deposed by the *wazir*. A tumult broke out; the men of old Delhi fled from their houses and their property was looted.

The Afghan troops burn Faridabad, cut off the heads of six or seven hundred poor people and bring them to Ahmad Shah Abdali, representing them to be the heads of Marathas killed in battle. The Abdali pays a reward of Rs 8 per head.

1757. The Emperor walks from the harem to the mosque on foot for want of any conveyance or horse.

The Ruhilas loot Jaswantpura and some other wards.

1759. The Marathas loot Nizamuddin Auliya and seize the men of the city for ransom.

The armies maintained by the imperial government and the nobles included many different races, such as Jats, North Indian Musalmans, Purbias or Oudh Hindus, Rajputs, Badakhshis (or men of Central Asia), Ruhilas, Mughals (by which the Persians were designated), and Telingas (or European-drilled Sepoys); and this diversity of races did not contribute to the peace of the city.

On 20th September 1753, some soldiers got inside the Fort and created a row for arrears of pay. They closed the treasury office and the gates of the Begams' residences, and the Emperor himself had to come to the *diwan-i-am* to pacify them.

On 13th February 1754, "the soldiers who were sitting in the Qudsia mosque for arrears of pay, created a tumult, prevented people from going to the Fort, and snatched away the turbans of the wayfarers and visitors to the mosque, thus closing the public roads. The *wazir* promised to pay them on Saturday next."

April 1754. "The Badakhshis rose in violence, demanding their pay. Lighting the fuses of their matchlocks, they advanced to arrest the Emperor. . . . The *wazir* encountered them, the Fort-guns also played on them. At last the *wazir* triumphed, but the *Khās Bazar* and *Khāri bāo'ī* were burnt."

June 1754. "The artillery men mutiny for arrears and close the Fort-gates. The *wazir* expels them."

Another year. "The gunners of the *wazir* fight for arrears of pay. The shops near the Lahori Gate are looted and burnt." Again, "soldiers stop the burial of the Mir Bakhshi (Paymaster-General, i.e. Commander-in-Chief) Khan-i-Dauran, demanding payment of their arrears."

1776. "Majd-ud-daula (the Emperor's favourite minister) is seized by the Telingas of the *paltan* of Bhavani Singh and Gangaram, on the road near the Delhi Gate and kept confined in the mosque of Raushan-ud-daula. He is released next day at night, on giving security for the payment of their outstanding salaries."

1787. "Telingas mutiny for arrears of pay. Tumult rages for two days in Deshmukh's camp. Three hours before sunset, the noise of muskets and artillery firing begins to be heard. One hundred men are slain and wounded on the two sides taken together."

1770. "The Marathas burn the villages near Sikandarabad, from which the inhabitants had fled in panic. At midnight the Gujars burn Sarganj and Shahdera."

1773. "The Sikhs loot Shahdera till midnight and carry off 50 boys. They leave four hours before dawn. Thereafter in that very night the Gujars loot it."

1782. "Sikhs from Kol encamp at Barari, . . . set fire to Malkaganj and Sabzi Mandi, and slay the men of Mughalpurā. The men of the city flee into the fort in terror."

Another year. "No lamp lighted in any house up to Faridabad. The Jats loot the caravans of fugitives. Near Faridabad 2,000 corpses lie exposed; and the Persian followers of the Abdali dig up the floors of the houses in that city."

1765. "As a Sikh raid was expected, it was proclaimed that none should leave the city of Delhi to make a pilgrimage to Kalika Devi [near the Qutb-minar]".

Another year. "A proclamation was made that as Ahmad Shah Abdali would enter the city, no one should sit on the roof of any house to behold the procession, that none should appear in arms in any street, and that the shops should remain closed." . . . "The Abdali's followers standing on the sand-bank loot the people who went to the wells for water. . . . The Mughals (*i.e.* Persian retainers of the Abdali) who went out to forage, attacked the houses in many of the lanes, broke the doors open and looted the property. The shops and bazars remained closed on account of their oppression."

"For one month the citizens of Delhi lay in a protracted death-agony at the rumours of the coming of the Abdali, who was fighting the Marathas at Kunjapura." . . . "The Afghans leave Delhi, and the joy of a second life appears in the city."

It is interesting to note that when wheat sold at 8 *seers*, *dals* coarser than *mung* at 10 *seers*, and *ghee* at 2 *seers* a rupee, famine was considered to be raging.

I have called this diary the *Delhi Chronicle* from its likeness to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. But there is one great difference between the two: the suffering Englishmen during the Danish raids had the consolation of knowing that their oppressors were not their own countrymen but aliens in race, language and religion while their grandsons found ample compensation when they saw a free united and greater England than ever before created by the political sagacity, public spirit and manly exertions of their own kings of the house of Alfred. These consolations were denied to the people of Delhi during the anarchy.

The historian will fail in his duty if he remains content with recording events without trying to draw from our past instruction for our future. The agony of Delhi during these forty years of anarchy is not without its lesson for us to-day. India was then parcelled out into a number of autonomous provinces, each living its own life in selfish isolation, taking no thought of the interests of the country as a whole, robbing and devastating its neighbours in this common fatherland of us all as remorselessly as foreigners from beyond the frontier. Our leaders and chieftains were without foresight or the larger patriotism, but seeking only the aggrandizement of their families or clans. The central government was paralysed

and extinct except as a tradition and a theory, like the Holy Roman Empire in mediæval Germany. There was no federal army or treasury for India as a whole, capable of repelling foreign invasion and maintaining internal order. Personal selfishness and parochial patriotism (where any patriotism existed) divided India. The result was the weakness of the country as a whole, the agony of forty years, and finally foreign conquest,—which last came as a relief to the long-suffering masses and may become, in the fulness of time, the dawn of a stronger, happier and wiser India, if we only utilize our present opportunities and learn wisdom from the rise and fall of nations as truthfully and dispassionately recorded by history.

Order is the beginning of all good things. National efficiency is the result of a long process of steady uninterrupted and ever-progressing endeavour directed by the wisest brains and the purest souls of the nation, of which anarchy is the greatest enemy. And national efficiency is necessary, if for nothing else, at least for national existence and national defence in the hard modern world.

There was no discussion on this paper.

### Sher Shah.

(By Professor L. F. Rushbrook Williams, M.A., B. LITT., O.B.E.)

The following is a note of the discourse :—

Professor Rushbrook Williams referred to the unsatisfactory nature of the authorities bearing upon the life of this remarkable man, characterising the Afghan sources as inaccurate and the Mughal sources as hostile. He briefly referred to the extraordinary interest and importance of the reign, which represented the practical application of a theory of kingship new to India,

The Professor then announced that he had been so fortunate as to discover an entirely new contemporary authority, which promised to throw light upon the many vexed questions with which the career of Sher Shah still abounded. This manuscript, which bore the title of *Tawarikh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shahi*, was the work of one Hasan Ali Khan, an intimate companion of Sher Shah from the boyhood to the grave. The Professor proceeded to read the list of contents of the book, which was unfortunately in a fragmentary condition. The chapter headings were as follows :—

*Preface:* Account of the author — Sketch of the history of India from the commencement of the sovereignty of Islam to the reign of Babar and the government of Nasir-ud-Din Humayun.

*Chapter One.* Account of the ancestors and of the birth of Farid.

*Chapter Two.* Account of Early Events—War with Humayun and success of Sher Shah.

*Chapter Three.* Accession of Sher Khan with the title of Sher Shah.

*Chapter Four.* Conquests and death of Sultan Sher Shah. (May the Most High be merciful to him !)

*Chapter Five.* Regulations of the Government of Sher Shah.

*Chapter Six.* Firmans of the reign of Sher Shah.

*Chapter Seven.* Account of the Condition of the Court and the People; and of the Sayings of Sher Shah.

The Professor stated that the fragments in his possession, which he hoped shortly to publish, included most of Chapter Two and all Chapter Six. He had some expectations that additional fragments of the remaining portions of the work might come into his possession subsequently.

Professor Rushbrook Williams then read translated portions of the ms. in order to illustrate to the meeting the character of the newly-discovered work. One of these portions described dramatically a love-affair between Sher Khan (or Farid as he then was) and the daughter of a Marwari who lived in the jagir concerning the possession of which there was so much ill-feeling between Farid and his brothers. The Professor examined this incident as a sample of the credibility of the author, and demonstrated that the simplicity and sincerity, with which incidents creditable and discreditable to Sher Shah were narrated, spoke much for the honesty of the narrator. As to the intimate association of Hasan Ali Khan with Sher Shah, there could be no question. Every line of the book bore witness to the closeness with which the author had studied even the most trivial details of Sher Shah's character and habits. This impression was reinforced, said the Professor, by the consideration that the book never seems to have been published in the ordinary sense of the word. Internal evidence shows that it was written after the death of Sher Shah, when the author was an old man out of favour with the court. There seemed good reason to believe that the fragmentary copy which had come to light was the only one in existence. It was unknown either to Indian or to European historians prior to this announcement of its discovery.

**Discussion.**—Professor Sarkar remarked that one of his research pupils was engaged on a minute and critical examination of the Persian sources on Sher Shah and the writing of an authentic history of that king, which was practically complete in manuscript. He thought that the manuscript discovered by Professor Williams might necessitate the rewriting of this history. He also referred to the contemporary Portuguese account of the Bengal campaigns of Sher Shah and Humayun by a Portuguese captain who took part in them.

## **Bengal and Bihar District Records, 1760-1790; their Historical Value and Methods of Preservation.**

(By the Ven. W. K. Firminger, D.D., B.LITT.)

In the year 1868 Sir William Hunter's work, *The Annals of Rural Bengal*, was published, and went through three editions in the short space of four months. On an early page Sir William tells us something about the origin of the book: "In-taking over the charge of the District Treasury," he writes, "I was struck with the appearance of an ancient press, which, from the state of its padlocks, seemed not to have been opened for many years, and with whose contents none of the native officials were acquainted. On being broken open, it was found to contain the early records of the district from within a year of the time that it passed directly under British

rule. The volumes presented every appearance of age and decay; their yellow-stained margins were deeply eaten into by insects, their outer pages crumbled to pieces under the most tender handling, and of some the sole palpable remains were chips of paper with the granular dust that white ants leave behind. Careful research has convinced me that these neglected heaps contain much that is worthy of being preserved.<sup>1</sup> For what trustworthy account have we of the real state of India at the commencement and during the early stages of our rule? Eloquent and elaborate narratives have indeed been written of the British ascendancy in the East; but such narratives are records of the English Government, or biographies of the English Governors of India, not histories of the Indian people. The silent millions who bear our yoke have found no annalist."

In the year 1904 the Hon'ble Mr A. P. Muddiman, who had been placed on special service to visit the District Record Rooms of Bengal, wrote of the old records of the Midnapur Collectorate: "The original letters, if kept any longer in their present form, will crumble to dust almost at once. They are of various sizes and shapes, and are bound up with no particular care. Many are torn, and every time the volume is opened they are bound to be damaged. Torn pieces of the letters are simply placed in haphazard, and are exceedingly liable to be lost." Some four years later, when I was permitted to study these very records, they had become one heap, the only evidence of their having at one time been bound up in six separate volumes being the wooden boards which had originally stiffened the covers, and as the papers frequently projected beyond the protection of the boards, their margins would break off at even the most delicate handling. To have attempted to read these papers with an electric fan at work above one's head would have been to involve the documents in still further ruin—"chips of paper mingled with the granular dust that white ants leave behind." These Midnapur papers have now been dealt with in the manner adopted by the Imperial Record Department; and the whole series of letters has been printed *in extenso*.

In the years 1908 and 1909 the then Government of East Bengal and Assam most kindly gave me an opportunity of studying the District Records of Sylhet, Chittagong, Rangpur and Dinajpur. The early Sylhet Records are of peculiar interest as they throw so much light on the extraordinary genius of the Hon. Robert Lindsay. In his autobiography, included in the *Lives of the Lindsays*, Lindsay has told us how at distant Sylhet he built sea-going vessels, stout enough not only to carry rice to Madras at a time of famine, but to venture across the China Sea to be sold at Canton; how, having by an astute deal with Government bargained to pay in cash at Calcutta the amount of the revenue collected in cowries, he obtained control of the local specie, and a practical monopoly of the lime business for which the name of Sylhet is famous. It was disappointing to find that there are but few records locally preserved which relate to the work of Lindsay's predecessor—the "Elephant-hunting" William Makepeace Thackeray—but I venture to think that the letters of Lindsay's successor, the prudent and conscientious Mr Willes, are particularly interesting as revealing a character

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that a rich yield of forgotten documents was drawn some years after Sir William Hunter's discoveries, from the same Treasury-room.



of a kind almost the direct antithesis to that of the enterprising, but possibly dangerous, Mr Lindsay. Four printed volumes of Sylhet District Records are now obtainable from the Assam Secretariat Book-room. Lindsay left behind only letter-copy books of his own correspondence, and I gather from a letter from the head of the Lindsay family that his ancestor, on leaving India, took all his original letters and judgments home with him, and that they still exist in Scotland. If my memory serves me correctly, I think I may say that there is only a single scrap in Lindsay's own writing preserved at Sylhet, and that is a somewhat amusing one. His perplexed assistant had asked him how he should deal with a letter from the Secretary of the Revenue Department calling for a delayed account of deposits and fines. Lindsay's reply is, "Say nothing about the money till called for." I may be pardoned perhaps if I venture to quote (not from the Sylhet Records) the advice given to Lindsay by his mother, old Lady Balcarres: "I understand, my dear Robert, that you are a great ship-builder—your talents in this line I do not dispute—but I have one favour to ask you, which is, that you will not come home on one of your own building."

It must not be supposed that the District Records would usually reveal personalities quite so interesting as Robert Lindsay: but it is no small part of the worth of the Midnapur Series that they rescue for us the doings of Lieutenant Fergusson. The story of his little wars with troublesome local chiefs is told in a simple manly way, and leaves behind an impression wholly favourable both as to his energy and his invariable kindness of heart. At Rangpur, where the well-known Tibetan traveller, George Bogle, was at one time Collector, we find nothing of much personal interest. Another Collector at Rangpur was Peter Moore,<sup>1</sup> the uncle and guardian of Thackeray, and the loyal supporter of R. B. Sheridan in his troubled old age: but Moore's transactions are of a purely formal character. Perhaps to the general reader the most interesting letters preserved at Dinajpur and Rangpur are the letters of the Commercial Residents to the Collectors of those places pleading for protection for the Company's weavers from the drastic attentions of the Revenue officials. There is much also to be said by the other side. These letters are sometimes in the handwriting of that great man Charles Grant and sometimes in that of George Vaney whose name is remembered as that of the protector of Dr Carey in the days when indigo-planting was the camouflage which concealed the activities of an inspired Baptist Missionary. It is delightful to read of how at one time the Collectors of Rangpur and Dinajpur, accompanied by an army of coolies, and assisted by the enterprising Mr Lyons (the same who has bestowed his name on the "Range" at the back of Writers' Buildings), set forth to put the insubordinate Tista River back in its bed again. The Assistant to the Collector of Dinajpur seems from the first to have felt that the folk from Rangpur required watching, so at last, (as the cynic no doubt prophesied at the time), the Tista was left to enjoy her new-made bed; but there must have been something like a ripple of laughter on the crests of

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* article in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Moore gave impassioned evidence against Hastings at the Impeachment. Another former Collector of Rangpur, Charles Parling, was heard in Hastings' favour.

her waves as the Government outlay of a lakh of rupees was sped forth on the way to the sea of no purpose by quarrelling minor officials.

The Rangpur District Records have something to say about the doings of Raja Devi Singh and the consequent outbreak of the inhabitants. It will be remembered that Edmund Burke, at the impeachment of Warren Hastings, in recounting the horrors in which his frenzied imagination clothed the Raja, caused the ladies to faint, while his almost insane eloquence occasioned the orator such a cramp in the stomach that for a considerable time he was compelled to desist. To investigate the circumstances connected with the troubles at Rangpur, a Mr J. D. Patterson had been sent to that place, and it was from Patterson's report Burke professed to derive his materials. Mr Patterson died at Dacca in 1809, aged 65. The manuscript volumes of his inquiry were discovered in the Record Room at Dacca in 1904. This is a good instance of the way in which local records have frequently been dispersed.

The Chittagong Series, which goes back to the cession of the Chittagong District in 1760, might from a historical point of view be expected to be important. These records are, however, very defective, and their condition is now almost desperate.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately Sir Henry Cotton's *Memorandum on the Revenue History of Chittagong* will help to assist the student in many places in which manuscript records are no longer available.

It might at first sight appear strange that so few District Record Rooms in the old province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa preserve records of earlier date than 1780. Burdwan, for instance, was ceded to the Company at the same time as Chittagong and Midnapur, but the District Record Room at Burdwan possesses no records earlier than the 16th May 1786. The explanation in this case is twofold. In the first place, Burdwan could so easily be reached from the Presidency, that when in 1760 Mr Sumner was appointed to supervise the revenues of that place it was decided that his office should remain at Calcutta. In the second place, it was thought expedient to utilise as much as possible the services of Raja Tilak Chand, who had replaced the "old zemindar." English text-books write very glibly "Battle of Plassey, June 23rd, 1757, secures Bengal for England," and it comes to us as a surprise to find that on 29th December 1760, the Burdwan Raja was able to place 10,000 men in the field to meet Captain Martin White's little army. In a battle five hundred of the Raja's men were left dead on the field, without the loss of a single man on Captain White's side: but despite this feat of arms, the Company preferred to ignore the fact that the Raja had assumed the position of an enemy, and it was not till 1763 that Mr John Johnston was able by firm but peaceful measures to reduce the Raja's "Najdean" forces, which had been wont to cost the district three lakhs of rupees per annum. The method of dealing with the Burdwan revenues adopted by Mr Johnston was the unfortunate one of putting up revenue farms at public auctions, a method which his successor as Resident, Harry Verelst, described as a creation of a "nursery of indolence." For the sale of revenue farms at a "public outcry," Verelst in August 1765 substituted a method of engaging "men of substance and character" to take charge of the collections, "with a promise

---

<sup>1</sup> The printing up of the Chittagong Records is now in hand.

that if they exerted themselves in the improvement, they should never be dispossessed, but meet with all due encouragement and power from the Company." When in 1769, Verelst, as Governor, sent out the "supravisors" to the districts, Burdwan, not belonging to the Diwani portion, was given no supravisor, but continued to be managed from the Presidency. When the Committee of Circuit went on tour under Warren Hastings in 1772, Burdwan was not dealt with, as a settlement for five years had already been fixed in 1770. In 1774, Burdwan became a seat of one of the five Provincial Councils of Revenue established in that year, and it also included under its jurisdiction the district of modern Chota Nagpur. When the Provincial Councils were abolished in 1781, Burdwan was granted a Collector, who however possessed only limited powers. The records of the Provincial Councils are to be found both at the India Office and at the Bengal Historical Record Room, but I am at present at a loss to say why there should be no District Records for the period 1781-1786 in the local Record Room at Burdwan.<sup>1</sup>

It is, of course, very largely due to the fact of the existence of Provincial Councils, whose records were ultimately returned to the Presidency, that the student at first jumps to the conclusion that either there were no resident English officials in certain districts prior to 1786, or that the records connected with these officials have actually perished. The valuable district histories compiled by Sir James Westland, Mr E. Glazier, Sir J. S. Cotton, and Mr Beveridge are incomplete because they shared in this misconception.

It may be convenient to state here the dates at which the locally preserved Bengal Records commence:—

Chittagong . . . .	1760	Hughli . . . .	1794
Midnapur . . . .	1763	Rajshahi (Jalpaiguri) . .	1790
Burdwan . . . .	1786	Khulna . . . .	1772
Bankura . . . .	1788	Birbhum . . . .	1786
Tippera (Comilla) . .	1771	Backarganj . . . .	1773
Rangpur . . . .	1777	Dacca . . . .	1770
Linaipur . . . .	1785	Malda . . . .	1775
Calcutta . . . .	1782	Nadia . . . .	1783
Jessore . . . .	1786	Faaidpur . . . .	1788
Neakhali . . . .	1784 (?)		

While we are considering the matter of the personal interest of these old papers I would like to refer to some collections which it has not been my good fortune to see, but which, as I anticipate, would yield a highly satisfactory harvest to the researcher. There is, for instance, the little station of Dumka, at which I understand are preserved the records connected with that hero among the early Collectors, Augustus Cleveland,<sup>2</sup> to whose memory a monument was raised at Bhagalpur, and is still preserved as a holy place, by Indian hands. A modern expert in revenue matters has expressed the opinion that Cleveland's administration was more generous than just—magnificent but not business-like. It would be interesting to discuss on what grounds that opinion is based. Again, there

<sup>1</sup> An account of the Burdwan District Records 1786-90, by Mr R. J. Hirst, will be found in *Bengal East and Present*, Vol. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Cleveland is the correct spelling, not Clevealand.

have undoubtedly been men who, if the spheres of their labours had been cast in the much talked of the Punjab, and not, as was the case, in the too little regarded North-East Frontier of the British Empire, would have left their names written large in the temple of fame side by side with the Lawrences. In some Assam Record Room we ought to be able to discover the records of David Scott, whose memory has not yet lost its magic on the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, and whose lofty monument looks down from the rain-beaten crag of Cherrapunji over the sleeping plains of the Surma. Perhaps, however, I may best close this part of my paper by quoting once again from Sir William Hunter :—

“These volumes, so silent on subjects about which we are already well informed, speak at length, and with utmost precision, on matters regarding which the Western world is profoundly ignorant. They depict in vivid colours the state of rural India when the sceptre departed from the Mussalman race. They disclose the complicated evils that rendered our accession for some time an aggravation rather than a mitigation of the sufferings of the people. They unfold one after another the misapprehensions and disastrous vacillations amid which our first solid progress was made. They impartially retain the evidence of low motives and official incompetence side by side with the impress of race devotion and administrative skill. But, taken as a whole, they reveal the secret of England’s greatness in the East. They exhibit a small band of our countrymen going forth to govern an unexplored and a half-subdued territory. Before the grave heroism and masterful character of these men, the native mind succumbed. Our troops originated for us a rude Maratha-like supremacy ; but the rural records attest that the permanent sources of the English ascendancy in Bengal have been, not their brilliant military successes, but deliberate civil courage and indomitable will.”

From the glowing accounts given by Sir William Hunter of the contents of these old papers, it must not be supposed that the study of them is all joy, or that every scrap is worth its weight in gold. On the contrary at least two-thirds of the documents are of but little interest to the historian, while the value of a considerable part of the collection to even the most painstaking student of Revenue administration is inconsiderable. There are hundreds of letters which are nothing more than covering letters connected with the transmission of medicines, treasury, stationery, etc. If these were carefully catalogued so that names of officers and offices were left on record, I believe it would be a great gain if documents of the kind were devoted to ruthless extermination. In India, where it is so difficult to maintain a competent staff of district record keepers, the attempt to preserve the valueless cannot but imperil the preservation of the valuable.

It has also to be pointed out that the methods in which the records have been kept vary considerably from place to place, and Collector to Collector. In one collection, for instance, papers of all kinds are simply bound together in more or less chronological order. In another collection an effort is made to sort the different letters under classified headings—an attempt which could easily be frustrated in the days before the rule came into vogue of dealing with only one subject in an official letter. The binding is often very badly done, the binder’s threads trespassing beyond the margin of the written matter, so that in order to read we have either to cut the threads, or else force

open the volume so widely that the paper cannot but suffer. I think that ultimately many of the bound volumes will have to be broken up, and each separate letter dealt with in the manner in which the Imperial Record Department deals with the Original Consultations ; *i.e.*, each separate letter should be repaired, if necessary, and placed in its own jacket, on the outside of which might be pasted an extract from the printed press-list. The objection to this method is the vast bulk represented by the jackets, but here I think a destruction of now worthless papers would to some extent counterbalance the increased bulk of the jackets.

In regard to the matter of weeding out and consequent destruction, I must draw attention to the fact that at District Record Rooms we usually find letter-copy book in which the original letters of the Collectors are entered, usually by scribes imperfectly instructed in the English language. We might expect to find the original letters of the Collectors in the archives of the Bengal Historical Record Room. Conversely, the original letters of the Heads of Departments addressed to the Collectors would in many cases be found in the District Record Rooms. Speaking *a priori* we would therefore expect to find a double set of District Records—originals of issue and copies. How far this is true to fact, our present knowledge of the contents of the Record Rooms does not permit us to say ; but, on the face of the matter, it would seem that there must be a great bulk of copied correspondence which might, after a careful examination, be destroyed ; and if this were done, the problem of dealing with the whole subject of the preservation of District Records and the manner in which they can be made available to the student, would cease to be insolvable on account of its wide range and serious expense to Government.

In regard to letters received, the District collections are very considerably inflated by circular letters sent out from Headquarters to the District authorities. I think that it was only towards the end of the Warren Hastings period that the circulars, codes, proclamations of Government were sent out in printed form. To print up each series of District Records would be to print these circulars over again in each case. I have, therefore, suggested that it would be sound policy to prepare and publish a volume of collected Government circulars, and if this were done the copies in the several District collections could be destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

There is another and an important question which arises for discussion. Is it desirable that District Records prior to the year 1800 should be removed from the District Record Rooms and in future be preserved at a central Provincial Record Room ? It may be said at once that an answer in the affirmative would take it for granted that certain conditions would have to be fulfilled by the central Record Room. The central Record Room would, for instance, have to supply the District Offices with copies of all volumes of District Records printed *in extenso*, and calendars of all records not printed *in extenso*, so that a District Officer would be able either to obtain, without delay, an authenticated copy of every document it might be necessary for him to consult for administrative purpose, or, in case of judicial proceedings, to have the original submitted for the information of the Court.<sup>2</sup> Even documents

<sup>1</sup> This proposal received the approval of the Commission.

<sup>2</sup> Since this paper was written Historical Record Committees have been formed by the Government of Bengal and the Calcutta High Court.

weeded out for destruction would need to be carefully listed, prior to passing to the incinerator.

One objection to the proposal to bring down the District Records to a central Record Room is that the withdrawal of these interesting papers from the District Offices would remove from young officials an incitement to study the past history of the districts to which they are attached. To this it may be replied that the state of extreme decay into which so many of the District Records have fallen affords a highly convincing proof of the contention that, as things are, these records are not often studied locally either by the practical administrator or by the type of official to whose sympathies past history makes a powerful appeal. It is moreover the case that, while the local antiquarian performs a most useful function, the evil in the past has been that the history of districts has been dealt with from far too exclusively a local point of view. It would be an immense gain to the local historian of Bankura to have before him the records, or a calendar of the records, of the mother Collectorate of Burdwan, and, in turn, the historian of Burdwan needs to be acquainted with the records of the neighbouring district of Midnapur. Mr. Glazier, for instance, who was Collector of Rangpur, needed to see, but failed to see, the records of Dinajpur, and this was a serious defect, since the two Collectorships were at one time combined.

The Commission has already advocated the publication *in extenso* of the Proceedings of the Revenue Councils, 1772-1781. It is desirable that this work should be completed as expeditiously as possible. I have already pointed out to the Commission that the publication of these Proceedings will place the new Government of Bihar and Orissa in possession of the contents of documents relating to their Province, and will at the same time obviate the removal of the original volumes<sup>1</sup> from easy access on the part of those who are studying Indian history at Calcutta. The same thing is also true of the Districts of Bengal. The publication of the Proceedings of the Councils will enable the student to a great extent to complete his inquiries just where the District Records of his own particular District break off, or are defective.<sup>2</sup>

**Discussion.**—Mr Dodwell remarked that the early district records threw considerable light on the condition of the people as a cursory perusal of Mr Dewar's *Handbook to the Pre-Mutiny records of the United Provinces* would show. With regard to the custody of such records, he informed the Commission that in Madras all the Collectorate records up to 1820 had been collected in the Provincial

<sup>1</sup> As to the principle of the undesirability of breaking up collections of records when new provinces are created, see *Proceedings of the Commission*, Vol. II, page 42. At the time when the present writer was, on behalf of the Government of East Bengal and Assam, dealing with the Sylhet records there were (or ought to have been) in the Record Room at Shillong a number of records relating to Sylhet which had been transferred by the Bengal Government. I learned of this fact too late to be able to avail myself of those records, and that the fact that there were such records at Shillong was not realised by Sir Lancelot Hare's Government at the time when the proposal to print up the Sylhet District Records was adopted.

<sup>2</sup> NOTE.—A paper on the subject of the Bengal District Records was read by Dr Firminger before the Royal Society of Arts on January 18th, 1912, and will be found in Vol. LX of the Society's *Journal*. In the discussion which ensued the reading of this paper, the policy of printing up the historical District Records was earnestly pleaded for by Sir Krishna Gobinda Gupta, K.C.S.I. (the Chairman), Mr S. C. Hill, Mr W. Foster, C.I.E., Mr H. Lutman-Johnson, and Sir Stuart Colvin Bayley, G.C.S.I., C.I.E. and (in a letter) by Sir G. W. Forrest, C.I.E.

Record Room. He was of opinion that concentration was very necessary. The earlier records very often required expert treatment by an expert staff. The district officers have not the requisite staff; besides, for a proper study of the evolution of the administrative system and of the condition of the people consultation of the records of more than one district was absolutely necessary.

### Letter of condolence on the death of the Emperor Shahjahan from Aurangzeb to Jahanara Begam and her reply.

(By Maulavi Zafar Hasan, B.A., Assistant Superintendent of Archæology.)

The letters which are noticed in this paper have been found written in a manuscript entitled *Maktūbāt-i Ḥamīd-ud-Dīn*. I came across it some time ago, and as it was not available I had to get it copied. The *Maktūbāt* is a collection of 123 letters from one Ḥamīd-ud-Dīn addressed to not less than 51 personages among whom are the Emperor Aurangzeb, his wife Dilras Bānū Begam, the mother of the latter, Nauras Bānū Begam, Raushanārā Begam, a few other ladies of high rank and position, and some nobles of the court of Aurangzeb. The letters under notice number 38 and 48 respectively. They were apparently not written by Ḥamīd-ud-Dīn, but their inclusion in the collection may be accounted for by their importance, which probably induced him to add them to his work. It is fortunate indeed that their copies have been thus preserved and I have an opportunity to read them before you in this meeting.

The *Maktūbāt-i Ḥamīd-ud-Dīn* is a very rare book, there having been only one copy of it ever brought to my notice. It has no introduction or preface, which generally contains the title of the work, the name of its author or compiler, and the date of its compilation, but begins abruptly with an account of the conquest of Bijapur by Aurangzeb. It was, however, on the fly-leaf of the original copy of the manuscript that its title was written, which also indicates the name of the author. Internal evidence to this effect is also not wanting; there are many letters which begin with the name of Ḥamīd-ud-Dīn as their author, and in illustration I quote a short extract from one of them below:—

عرضداشت خانه زان کترین حمیدالدین ناصیه بخت بعتبه سای برافروخته بموقف  
بار یافتهاے بارگاه فلک اشتباه میرساند —

#### TRANSLATION.

“Application of the mean slave Ḥamīd-ud-Dīn who brightening the forehead of his fortune by rubbing it on the (royal) threshold lays it (the application) before the attendants of the heaven-like court.”

The fact that the author of the manuscript had the privilege of addressing the ladies of the royal harem shows that he was a trusted noble of the court of Aurangzeb, and in my opinion was no other than Ḥamīd-ud-Dīn *Khān Bahādur*, the son of Sardār *Khān Kotwāl*, and the grandson of Bāqī *Khān Chila Qilmāq*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Maāthir-ul Umarā*, Vol. I, pp. 605-611.

Hamīd-ud-Dīn Khān was introduced to the court by his father at a very early age, and he rose to great eminence during the reign of the Emperor Aurangzeb. He was so much devoted to the Emperor that on his death he wore the garb of a *darwīsh* (mendicant) and betook himself to dusting his grave. His seclusion was, however, not of any long duration, for he was soon induced by Prince Muḥammad Ā'zam Shāh, who had gone from Ahmadnagar to visit the tomb of his father, to abandon it and resume the court life. The subsequent career of Hamīd-ud-Dīn was chequered. He was treated with due respect by Shāh 'Ālam Bahādur Shāh I, but suffered disgrace during the succeeding reigns until 'Ālamgīr II restored him to the post of *Dāroghā of Gurz Bardārs* (Superintendent of mace bearers), which honour he did not long enjoy, dying soon after its bestowal.

Letters of Aurangzeb are very common, many of which have long since been lithographed and read in Indian schools or *maktabs* in connection with the study of the Persian language. The chief interest lies here in the letter of Jahānārā Begam. This accomplished princess is well known for her literary pursuits. Her favourite study was religion, especially Sufism, and she was the authoress of a treatise which contains a biography of Khwāja Mu'īn-ud-Dīn of Ajmer with brief notices on his chief disciples, the Chishtī saints, for whom she entertained great respect. For some time she was keeper of the Privy Seal, and in this position all the mandates issued by her father passed through her hands. It is a pity that only a few of her writings are known to us, and I trust that this new find will make an appreciable addition to them.

According to the usual practice of the age, the letters under discussion do not bear dates, but we can safely assume that they were written between the 26th *Rajab* 1076 A.H. (1st February 1666 A.D.) and the 9th of the ensuing month of *Shahbān* (14th February). The news of Shāhjahān's death was brought from Agra to Aurangzeb at Delhi in the evening of the 26th *Rajab*, and his letter marked with keen emotions of sorrow and seemingly written in the first outburst of grief might be dated the same or the next day of that month. It is, however, difficult to assign with such exactness a date to Jahānārā's reply. In all probability it would have been despatched before the 9th of *Shahbān* when Aurangzeb started for Agra. The letter of the Emperor Aurangzeb runs as follows:—

آفریدگار جهان عزاسمه آنده شفق مهربان را درین حادثه عظیم صبر جمیل فرموده اجر  
جزیل کرامت کناد چه نگاشته آید و کجا بنگارش گنجد که از قضیه ناگزیر برخاطر غمگین  
چه میگذرد قلم را چه یارا که ازین درد جگر کداز حرفه نگار و زبان را کجا طاقت که ازین  
الم شکیب ربا برگذارد تصور غم و اندره انصاحبه دل بیتاب را بیشتر برقت و اضطراب می  
آرد اما با تقدیر ایزدی و قضای آسمانی جز بیچارگی و تسلیم چاره نیست کُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ  
وَيَبْقَى وَجْهٌ رَبِّكَ فَذُرْ الْجَلَالَ وَالْاَکْرَامِ ۝ بهمه حال اینهمه درد شرمسار را بزودی انشاءالله  
تعالی رسیده دانند یقین که نسبت بتعزیت داران اعلی حضرت خصوص اکبر ابادی محل  
تسلیه که باید می کرده باشند مهربانمن چیزے که درینوقت یکار آنحضرت می آید



رسانیدن ثواب تلاوت قرآن مجید و خیرات مستحقان است درینباب نهایت سعی نمایند  
و ثواب انرا بروح انحضرت هدیه بگذرانند و این گنہگار نیز درین کار است امید که  
شرف قبول یابد —

#### TRANSLATION.

“May the creator of the world, whose name be exalted, give patience to that affectionate and loving (sister) at this severe calamity and grant her a proper reward ! What may be written and how can that be expressed which passes in this sad heart on account of this unhappy event ? Poor is the power of the pen to write even a single letter about this heart-rending pain, and powerless is the tongue to express this miserable distress. The idea of the grief and anguish of Her Highness often makes this restless heart weep and lament, but nothing can be done against the inevitable decree of God and heavenly predestination except resignation and submission to it. ‘Every creature which liveth on the earth is subject to decay : but the glorious and honourable countenance of God shall remain for ever.’<sup>1</sup> In all circumstances she may rest assured that this ashamed in spite of all his grief will soon reach her. I am sure the mourners of his late Majesty, especially Akbarābādī Mahāl,<sup>2</sup> have been given due consolation. My dear (sister), the thing which should be done for his late Majesty at this time is the reciting of the holy Qurān and distribution of alms among the deserving : she should try her best in the performance of these and should offer them to his soul. This sinner is also doing the same, and hopes that it will receive the honour of acceptance (by God).”

The letter of the princess Jahānārā Begam is as follows :—

تقدس و تعالی همواره سایه عاطفت بادشاه عالمگیر را بر عالمیان پاینده و باقی دارد و  
قلم را چه قدرت که شرح این مصیبت جانگداز به تحریر درآورد و شمه از کیفیت این روز  
سیاه بر لوح عرض برنگار و زبان را چه یاراکه آنچه حادث شده در ضمیر تواند گذراند آنچه  
ازین قضیه بر سر من گذشته اگر بدریا میگذشت خشک می شد و اگر بر روز می رسید شب  
دیجور می نمود هر چند عقل میداند که در امثال این حادثات تدبیرے بغیر از اعتصام  
صبر و شکیبایی میسر نیست و چاره جز تمسک به آیات الهی و احادیث حضرت  
رسالت پناهی که در باب رضا و تسلیم نازل و واردست متصور نه امثال اثر آن ذره زبانه  
ازانست که حوصله تاب آورد و در هنگامی که با خاطر سرگوار دیده اشکبار مستغرق بحر  
اندوه و ملال بده اشعه افتاب عنایت آن استظهار مهربان ساطع و لامع گردید همانا که

<sup>1</sup> Qurān, Sura LV, verses 26 and 27.

<sup>2</sup> Akbarābādī Mahāl was one of the wives of Shāhjahān. Her real name was Afīzun Nisā Begam and she seems to have been a favourite wife of the emperor in his old age. There are several mosques and gardens at Delhi and Agra known after this queen. She died on the 4th Zil-Hijjah 1087 A.H. (7th February 1677) during the reign of Aurangzeb.

آب حیات بود کہ براتش سوزان این نیازمند ریخت لا جرم از بے تابي و ناشکیبائي باز آمده بہ نصیحت ذات عالی درجات آن کوکب عالم افروز سلطنت و آن سزارار تاج و تخت خلافت دل را تسلي داده بدعائے مزید عمر و دولت گرامی پرداخت امیدوار است کہ این آتش جانگداز بزال ملاقات انقدره سلاطین منطقی گردد و ظلمت شام غم اندرد بفروغ صبح سعادت مبدل شود اشاره در باب تعزیت داران بندگان حضرت اعلیٰ خصوصاً اکبر آبادی محل شده بود ظاهر رویداست کہ اکنون رعایت همگی تمامی باز ماندہائے بعنایت و توجہ ایشان وابستہ درینصورت چہ نگارش رود کہ بر ایشان ظاهر نباشد زیادہ چہ نویسد —

#### TRANSLATION.

“May the high and holy God keep the shadow of benevolence of the king ‘Ālamgir for ever over the universe! The pen has no power to bring in writing an account of this soul-melting distress and to describe even an atom of the state of this unfortunate being. The tongue is destitute of power to impress upon the mind what has happened. Had the distress which I suffered from this unhappy event befallen a river it would have dried up, or had it happened to a day it would have turned into a gloomy night. Although it is known by common sense that in the events like this nothing is effectual except patience, and there is no remedy but obedience to the commandments of God and the sayings of His Holiness, the refuge of prophecy (Muhammad), which are recorded concerning resignation and submission, yet the feelings of sorrow are beyond my endurance. At the time when with mournful heart and tearful eyes I was immersed in the sea of distress and affliction, a bright ray from the Sun of kindness of that dispenser of favours was shone and flashed upon me (*i.e.*, Aurangzeb’s letter arrived), and it was as if the water of life was poured over the burning fire of this suppliant. Accordingly I desisted from restlessness and impatience, and having consoled my heart by the advice of that dignified personality and world-illuminating star of empire worthy of crown and throne, I am busy in prayers for his long life and reign. It is expected that by the interview of that model of kings this soul-melting fire will be extinguished, and the gloomy dusk of sorrow will be changed into bright dawn of felicity. An order was given regarding the mourners of his late Majesty, especially Akbarābādī Mahal : it is evident and apparent that all survivors are now dependent on his kindness and care. Regarding this matter what else can be written which is not known to him? Nothing more is to be added.”

On the 12th of *Rajab* the year 1076 A.H. (18th January 1666 A.D.) Shāhjahān had an attack of retention of urine and his illness took a serious turn. Aurangzeb having heard of this at Delhi formed the intention to proceed to Agra, and immediately sent off Prince Mu‘azzam to attend upon him. But the prince was some seven miles from Agra when he received the sad news of the demise of his grandfather. It is related that Shāhjahān retained perfect composure and full consciousness till he breathed his last. His death occurred early in the

night preceding the 20th *Rajab* (1st February 1666). At the orders of Jahānārā, Rad Andaz Khān, the commander of the fort, and Khūāja Phūl (or Bahlol), the eunuch, came to the Ghusal Khāna (the *Dīwān-i-Khāss* or hall of private audience) and opening the wicket of the fort gate sent for Sayyid Muḥammad of Qannauj, who was a very religious and pious man and had been in constant company of Shāhjahān during his imprisonment, and Qāzī Qurbān, the Qāzī of Agra, to perform the burial ceremonies. It was about midnight that these two arrived, and after some preliminary observances got admittance into the *Muthamman* Burj (octagonal tower) where Shāhjahān had expired. They removed the corpse to a neighbouring hall and having bathed and shrouded it placed it in a sandal-wood coffin. The coffin was then brought outside the fort through the gateway under the tower and was carried by this party, which was now joined by Hoshdār Khān, the governor of Agra, and other local officers to the riverside, wherefrom it was conveyed in a boat to Tāj Maḥal. Here the funeral prayers were read, and Shāhjahān was given the last resting place by the side of the grave of his favourite queen Mumtāz Maḥal.

Prince Muʿazzam arrived the same day, but he was too late to attend the burial. Next day he visited Jahānārā Begam and other ladies of the Imperial Harem, and arranged for prayers and the reading of the *Qurʾān* for the benefit of the soul of the deceased Emperor. In the evening of the 26th *Rajab* the intelligence of Shāhjahān's death reached Aurangzeb, who immediately went in mourning with all his court and harem. Muḥammad Kāzim, the court chronicler of Aurangzeb, relates that when the Emperor heard the sad news of his father's death, he shed tears and showed signs of great agony and distress. As stated in his letter, Aurangzeb at once began to make arrangements for his departure to Agra, and starting as early as the 9th of Shaʿbān (14th February) reached there on the 20th (25th February) of that month. The next day he visited the tomb of his parents, offered prayers for them with tears, and gave twelve thousand rupees to the attendants. He remained in the tomb for some time and read his midday prayers there. The following day he went to the fort to console Jahānārā and other survivors of the deceased Emperor. During his stay at Agra, Aurangzeb repeatedly paid visits to the tomb of Shāhjahān, offered prayers and gave money in charity for the peace of the soul of his father.

The letters under notice supplement the account quoted here from the contemporary histories of Aurangzeb,<sup>1</sup> and are indicative of his sorrow at the death of his father, and of his tender feelings and sympathies for the survivors of the deceased. In view of these facts there naturally arises a question, whether Aurangzeb had really been guilty of such monstrous and cruel treatment of his father during his imprisonment as has been stated by some later historians. As far as he is concerned, it may be said that his expressions of sorrow and grief could only be hypocritical, and his condolence to Jahānārā a mere matter of formality, or that they were the outcome of his feelings of remorse after the victim of his cruelties had departed, leaving him free from any anxiety on his account; but the letter from Jahānārā

<sup>1</sup> *ʿĀlamgīr Nāma*, 931-939; *Maʾāthir-i-ʿĀlamgīrī*, 53-54; *Muntakhab-ul-lubāb*, Vol. II, 187-188.

presents quite a different view. She acknowledges his condolence and sympathies as true and genuine, and leaves no room for us to consider them otherwise. She begins her letter with a prayer for Aurangzeb, then giving an account of her sorrow at the death of her father, declares that his sympathetic letter gave immense consolation to her, and by his advice she succeeded in making her heart easy. Further she expresses a hope that his visit would thoroughly appease her heart and make her happy. The filial love of Jahānārā needs no comment here. Her beloved father, was the centre of all her affections for whose sake she voluntarily imposed upon herself an imprisonment of more than seven years, and nursed him with all tenderness until he breathed his last. It is not possible that she would have so fervently acknowledged and welcomed sympathies from the tormentor of her revered father, specially at the time when his sufferings and death would have been fresh in her memory. History bears testimony to her loffiness of character, innocent pride and sense of self-respect, and it cannot be supposed that such a dignified and high-souled princess should have stooped to flatter Aurangzeb with a view to gaining his favour or averting his wrath for fear of any evil from him. She had already been in prison for a long while, accustomed to deprivation of all enjoyments of life, and consequently was in a state beyond feeling any apprehension of the displeasure of her royal brother. If, therefore, she had genuine feelings of resentment at his cruel conduct towards her helpless father, she would not have feared to incur her brother's displeasure by giving those feelings expression. The stories of Aurangzeb's hard treatment of his father refer only to irritated complaints of Shāhjahān, which originated during his early days of confinement on account of the strict measures of watchfulness adopted by Aurangzeb because of his father's persistency in making intrigues against him. It cannot be denied that the conduct of Aurangzeb in dethroning and imprisoning his father was very unnatural ; but it will have to be admitted at the same time that he was never wanting in respect for him, and as soon as the ex-emperor desisted from making intrigues, he no longer disturbed him but took every care for his ease and comfort. Khāfi Khān, who says that Jahānārā had to make requests repeatedly three times to Shāhjahān at his death-bed before she could obtain his pardon for Aurangzeb, does not himself take responsibility for the authenticity of this statement, but relates it as a story prevalent among the public. It seems that after the defeat and flight of Shāh Shujā' and the beheading of Dārā Shikoh, Shāhjahān resigned himself to his fate, and became reconciled to Aurangzeb. History does not relate any event to contradict this assumption, which on the other hand receives ample support from the letter of Jahānārā.

**Discussion.**—Professor Sarkar remarked that the authenticity of these letters required further investigation. - The author of the paper had so far been able to discover only one copy of the correspondence, but one would have expected from the case of other letters of Aurangzeb, that several copies of such an important correspondence would survive. Personally he was doubtful about the genuine character of the letters, unless he could examine the manuscript. The bitter correspondence between Aurangzeb and Shah Jahan, when the latter was closely invested in Agra

fort and his drinking water was cut off by his rebellious son, has been preserved in copies in places as far apart as London and Calcutta, whereas of the letters referred to by Mr Zafar Hasan only a single copy has been found.

### Life in an English Factory in India in the Seventeenth Century.

(By H. G. Rawlinson, M.A., F.R.Hist.S., Principal, Karnatak College, Dharwar.)

Of the many factories or *emporia* established by the English in the East after the foundation of the East India Company in 1600, the earliest, and for a long time the most important, was that of Surat. Surat, the *Bab ul Makka*, or pilgrim-gate, was the principal Muhammadan port in Western India. The English factory had numerous visitors during the seventeenth century, the most interesting being Pietro della Vallé (1624), Sir Thomas Herbert (1629), Tavernier (1635), Mandelslo (1638), Bernier (1664), and Thévenot (1666). But the most detailed accounts of every-day life at Surat, and the organization of the factory, are to be found in the pages of Fryer and Ovington and so a few words by way of preface about these writers will probably be found useful.

John Fryer, M.D. Cantab., and a Fellow of the Royal Society, was appointed in 1672 as Company's Surgeon at Surat, on what does not seem to us to be a very princely salary of Rs 50 *per mensem*. He stayed in the East from 1673 to 1681. During that time he visited the Coromandel Coast, Bombay, Surat, Junnar, Goa, and Karwar, and also travelled extensively in Persia. His *New Account of East India and Persia*, 1698, edited by Mr W. Crooke for the Hakluyt Society, contains a highly valuable and detailed description of the English Factories at Surat and Bombay, and is the standard source of our information on the subject. Of Padre Ovington we know very little beyond the fact that he paid a flying visit to India in 1689, as chaplain of the Company's ship *Benjamin*, and, like many globe-trotters since, on the strength of this sat down to write a book on India. To this he presumed to affix the somewhat ambitious motto :

"Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes."

This brought upon him a sharp reproof from Captain Alexander Hamilton, who himself travelled extensively in the East from 1688 to 1723. "I know a reverend gentleman," writes Hamilton, "who came to Bombay in India, chaplain

of the ship *Benjamin*. . . . the chaplain stayed in Bombay and Surat, employed in his ministerial duties and in making his ingenious observations and remarks, which he published when he returned to England, for which he received a great deal of applause and many encomiums from some of his reverend brethren and a particular compliment from the governor of the church. Yet I know that his greatest travels were in maps." Hamilton, however, was an interloper, and a hater of the Company in general and Sir John Child in particular. So his remarks may be taken *cum grano salis*. Ovington possessed a racy style and

*A New Account of the East Indies*, 1727, p. xiv, Preface,

a rare turn of humour, and his quaint little volume, entitled *A Voyage to Surat, in the year 1689, giving a large Account of that City and its Inhabitants, and of the English Factory there*, is one which I would not readily part with. Another source of information is a series of letters, supposed to be by Sir Streynsham Master, a well-known servant of the Company, and reprinted in Yule's *Hedge's Diary*.

Besides these, there are the records of the Company itself, preserved at the India Office. These records may be classified as follows :—

- (1) *Original Correspondence*.—(Letters received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East.)
- (2) *Letter Books*.—(Office copies of letters despatched from the East India Company to its factories in the East.)
- (3) *Factory Records*.—(Copies of letters despatched and received, arranged according to factories.)
- (4) *Court Minutes*, or minutes of the meetings of the Company.

These were first described in Sir George Birdwood's *Report on the Miscellaneous Records in the India Office (1879)*. The following series of letters have been published :—

- (1) *Calendar of State Papers, East Indies, China and Japan, 1513-1634*. 5 vols. W. N. Sainsbury. 1862-1892.
- (2) *First Letter Book of the East India Company, 1600-19*. Birdwood and Foster. 1893.
- (3) *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East, 1602-7*. 6 vols. W. Foster.
- (4) *English Factories in India*, a calendar of documents in the India Office, 1618-55. 9 vols. W. Foster.
- (5) *Court Minutes of the East India Company, 1635-59*. 5 vols. W. Foster and E. B. Sainsbury.
- (6) *Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies*. H. Stevens of Vermont. 1886.
- (7) *Selections from the letters, etc., preserved in the Bombay Secretariat*. Sir G. W. Forrest, 1885.

The first Englishman to land in Surat was William Hawkins in 1608. But a regular factory was not established until the time of Sir Thomas Roe (1615-18) owing chiefly to the opposition stirred up by the Portuguese. "The house provided for the entertainment of the English at Surat," says Ovington, "belongs to the Mogul, and is fitted with the best accommodation of any in the city. It is situated in the north-west part of it, and is able to give convenient lodgings to forty persons, besides several decent apartments to the President. Our landlord Aurangzeb is extreme kind and liberal in permitting us to expend the rent, which is £60 yearly, either in beautifying, repairing, or in additional rooms to the house, so that he seldom receives much rent from us. It is built with the conveniences of several cellars and warehouses, of a tank of water and an *Humlum*." Fryer adds that the building

was two-storeyed, "without representations" (apparently in deference to Muhammadan sentiments), and flat-roofed. The lower part consisted of godowns and offices : upstairs were living rooms, a large dining-room and a chapel. The President had his own suite, "with noble rooms for counsel and entertainment," and seldom dined in the hall.

The first and most interesting fact to notice about the factory was that it was conducted "more like a College, Monastery, or a House under Religious Orders than any other," as a contemporary writer puts it. This was characteristic of the age in general. The Merchant Adventurers at Bruges, and the factory of the Levant Company at Aleppo, were similarly organized. The factors, as at a College in Oxford or Cambridge, dined together in Hall, and attended daily prayers in chapel. Discipline was strict. "Lying abroad" entailed a fine of Rs 40. "If any be drunk or abuse the natives, they are to be set at the gate in irons all the daytime, and all the night to be tied to a post in the house." The Company did its best to repress all 'disorderly and unchristian conversation, and to reduce all their people in their several factories and colonies, not only to a civil, but also to a religious and pious comportment, that may render our nation honorable, and the religion we profess amiable in the sight of those Heathens among whom they reside. Ovington publishes a resolution of the Company :—

'That the Agents and Chiefs, in their several factories, take care to prevent all profane swearing and taking the Name of God in vain by cursed oaths : all drunkenness and intemperance, all fornication and uncleanness : and that if any will not be reformed, and do not abstain from these vices, but after admonition and reprehension shall be found guilty again, that then such punishment shall be inflicted on them, consisting with the laws of God and this Kingdom, as the Agent and Council shall find their crime to deserve. And that if after such punishment inflicted, he or they will not amend or be reformed, then the Agent is strictly enjoined and required to send home for England by the next ships such person or persons so unreclaimable, that they may not remain in India, to the dishonour of God, the scandal of religion, the discredit of our Nation, and the perverting of others.' Intermariages with the people of the country, such as had been encouraged with fatal results by the Portuguese, were strictly forbidden. 'It's alsoe of very ill consequence that your Covenant Servants should intermarry with any of the people of the country or those of mixed race or *Mustechees*, therefore we desire your Honour would continue it as a standing rule that none doe rise in your service, or rather bee not retained in your service as a Covenant Servant, as Factore or Merchant, that shall marry with any of the country not of Europe parents, but immediately be discharged from being either Factor, Merchant or higher quality.'

The staff of the factory consisted of the President, his Council (which included the accomptant, the warehouse-keeper, the secretary, and certain senior factors), the chaplain, the surgeon, the junior factors, and the writers or apprentices.

The office of President was one of great dignity and importance, for the President controlled all the English factories in Western India and Persia, and also Bantam for a considerable time. The President was usually appointed from England, and could look forward to honourable employment at the Company's head-

quarters after his return, if he acquitted himself well. He had to sign a bond for £5,000 on good security; he received a salary of £500 per annum. Three to five years was the usual term of office. The President lived in state; he dined in his own apartments, except on festive occasions, and went abroad in a palanquin, preceded by guards, flagmen, and mace-bearers, with an ostrich-feather fan, like the noblemen of the Mughal court. Next in importance came the councillors, senior factors, four or five in number, who received from £300 to £100 per annum, according to seniority of service. Of these, the senior member was the accomptant. He ranked next to the President, and was a person of high rank in the eyes of the Company, as through his hands passed the receipts for the whole of India. He was, in fact, the Company's treasurer in the East. Next to him came the warehouse-keeper, 'who registers all Europe goods vended, and receives all Eastern commodities bought'; and the purser, 'who gives account of all goods exported and imported, pays the seamen their wages, provides waggons and porters, looks after tackling for ships and ships' stores.' Lastly came the secretary, 'who models all consultations, writes all letters, and carries them to the President and council to be perused and signed; keeps the Company's seal, which is affixed to all passes and commissions; and records all transactions and sends copies of them to the Company.' Two other well-known figures were the chaplain and the surgeon. The chaplain received £100 per annum, and board, lodging, and attendance free. The surgeon received £50 and his drugs.

'Apart from these dignitaries,' says Fryer, 'the mass of the Company's servants may be comprehended in these classes, *viz.* Merchants, factors and writers; some Bleucoat boys also have been entertained under notion of apprentices for seven years, which being expired, if they can get security they are capable of employments. The writers are obliged to serve five years for £10 per annum, giving in bond of £500 for good behaviour, all which time they serve under some of the forementioned offices; after which they commence factors, and rise to preferment and trust according to seniority or favour, and therefore have a £1000 bond exacted from them, and have their salary augmented to £20 per annum for three years, then entering into new indentures, are made senior factors; and lastly, merchants after three years more; out of whom are chose chiefs of factories, as places fall, and are allowed £40 per annum during their stay in the Company's service, besides Lodgings and victuals at the Company's charges.'

What strikes the reader most forcibly is the lowness of the salaries. Even granted that servants cost two or three rupees a month, and that everything else in India in the seventeenth century was on a similar scale, it is difficult to see what inducement even a 'Bleucoat boy' could find to set off against the perils and discomforts of Indian life in a salary of £10 per annum, rising to £20 in five years. We must remember, however, that, as Ovington tells us, the Banyans, 'once a year, which is their grand Festival Season, called the Dually (*Divali*) time, have a custom

Terry says: "I have seen a good mutton sold for the value of one shilling. Four couple of henns for the same price, one hare at the value of a penny, three partridges for as little and so in proportion all the rest."

The rupee was then at 2s. 9d., and the purchasing value of money was four times what it was in 1914.



much like that of our Christmas gifts of presenting the President and Council, the Minister, Surgeon, and all the Factors and Writers with something valuable, either in jewels or plate, *atlusses* or other silks, according to the respect which they owe to every man's station. Whereby the young factors, besides their salaries, diet and lodgings, are supplied likewise with clothes sufficient for service a great part of the year. 'Which things prevent their necessity of any great annual expense, and happily contribute towards giving them a life of delight and ease.' Moreover, 'They all have given them their diet and lodging gratis by the Company, besides wages,' continues Ovington, 'and the advantageous liberty of traffick to all parts, wherein from China to Surat, they commonly make cent per cent; they can sometimes make 50 per cent from thence, if they only carry out silver and bring home gold; and those among them that are persons of credit and esteem, but of small fortunes may borrow from the Banyans money for China at 25 per cent, and that only to be paid upon the safe arrival of the ship, which if it miscarries in the voyage, they are exempt from all damage. To some parts their gains amount to more, to some they are less, according to the distance of ports and opportunities of trade. Even the chaplain made a good deal of money over and above his somewhat slender salary. 'Besides many private gifts from merchants and Masters of ships,' says Ovington, 'who seldom fail of some valuable oblation to him, or rarity of the place they come from; he constantly receives noble large gratuities for officiating at Marriages, Baptisms and Burials'. In the same way, the surgeon received handsome fees from rich Indian patients. One of the most entertaining chapters of Fryer's work describes his visit to Junnar, to cure the wife of the Muhammadan governor, a 'plump, russet dame,' who, after he had bled her, 'poured upon her extravasated blood a golden shower of pagods.'

It is possible, from the accounts which have come down to us, to reconstruct pretty accurately the daily life in the Surat factory. Our ancestors rose at dawn, and *chota hazari* consisted of a cup of "burnt wine," i.e., wine which had been heated by dropping into it an ingot of red-hot gold. The day began with prayers, for the Company, in true Puritan fashion, combined piety with profit. 'We have prayers every morning before the doors of the Factory are open, and every night between eight and nine o'clock after the doors are shut: upon Sundays we have twice in the day solemn service and sermons read and preached, and prayers at night. This office is performed by the President, and in case of his absence by the chief of the Council or other next in the Factory if there be no Minister (or *Padre* as we call them).'

After prayers, the business of the day began. 'They live in a continual hurly-burly,' says Fryer, 'the banyans presenting themselves from the hour of ten till noon; and then afternoon at four till night, as if it were an exchange in every row; below stairs, the packers and warehouse-keepers, together with merchants bringing and receiving musters, make a mere Billingsgate; for if you make not a noise, they hardly think you intent on what you are doing.' Trade was principally in the hands of the *Banyans* or brokers, as our ancestors, contrary to the popular opinion, were seldom proficient enough in the vernaculars to carry on business transactions

independently. "For the buying and more advantageous disposing of the Company's goods," says Ovington, "there are brokers appointed who are of the *Banyan* craft, skilled in the rates and value of all the commodities in India. To these is allowed three per cent for their care and trouble." William Bolts, writing half a century later from Bengal, speaks of the *Banyan* as "interpreter, head book-keeper, head secretary, head broker, the supplier of cash, and cash-keeper." The chief imports from England were coin and bullion, different kinds of cloth, hardware, and knick-knacks or "toys." Of the exports, collected from various parts of the East, the principal were various kinds of cotton goods, *e.g.*, Surat calicoes, Broach *Baftas* (woven cotton), Bombay *Saloos* (red cotton) and Karwar Dungaree cotton. From Ahmadabad came woven satins known as atlases, from Agra indigo and shellac, from Calicut spices, pepper, and precious stones, and from China, sugar, tea, lacquer-ware and quicksilver. The prices of these articles, as stated in the factory records, are of great interest, but the subject is too complicated for treatment at this juncture.

At noon, the offices were closed, and the factors repaired to the dining-hall for the chief repast of the day.

Dinner was a portentous affair. Padre Ovington, who, chaplain though he was, had evidently not learnt to abandon the pleasures of the table, describes it with evident gusto. All the dishes were of pure silver, massy and substantial, and so were the 'tosses' or cups. Before dinner, a large silver ewer and basin for washing the hands was taken round by a *peon*. Indian, Portuguese, and English cooks were employed, so as to 'please the curiosity of every palate': pilaus, cabob curries with plenty of chutneys and relishes, and a 'dumpoked' fowl, that is, a fowl stewed in butter and stuffed with almonds and raisins, were ordinary dishes. This was washed down with plenty of 'generous Shiraz wine and arrack punch, served round the table.' On Sundays and holidays, the meal was made 'more large and splendid,' with venison, peacocks, and other game, Persian fruits, such as apricots, plums, and cherries. European wines and bottled beer were added. The latter in particular excited the curiosity of the natives; a wealthy Indian who dined at the factory caused great amusement by asking how it was put in. When we hear that the meal sometimes ran to sixteen courses, we are able to understand the complaint that excessive indulgence in meat and alcohol was responsible for many deaths and much more sickness. After dinner the silver ewer once again went round, and then the loyal toasts, the King, and the Company, were drunk by all. Dinner over, all retired for the afternoon *sicsta*. Work started again at four. At six the factory was cleared of outsiders and the gates were closed. Prayers were again read, after which supper was served. At supper the President often made his appearance; the meal was an informal one, and on sultry nights was often laid in the groves or gardens near the waterside, whither the factors repaired 'to spend an hour or two with a cold collation and a bottle of wine.' After this, no one was allowed to stir out until the gates were opened at dawn the following morning. On holidays, a favourite diversion was an expedition into the country. 'The President,' says Ovington, 'upon solemn days generally invites the whole factory abroad to some

pleasant garden adjacent to the city, where they may sit shaded from the beams of the Sun, and refreshed by the neighbourhood of tanks and waterworks. The President and his Lady are brought hither in palanquins, supported each of them by six peons, which carry them by four at once on their shoulders. Before him at a little distance are carried two large flags or English Ensigns, with curious Persian or Arabian horses of state, which are of great value, rich in their trappings and gallantly equipped, that are led before him. The furniture of these and several other horses, whereon the factors ride, is very costly; the saddles are all of velvet richly embroidered, the headstalls, reins and croupers are all covered with solid wrought silver. The Captain of the *Peons* at this time ascends his horse, and leads forty or fifty others with him, which attend the President on foot. Next the President, follow the Council in large coaches, all open, except their wives are in them; the several knobs about them are all covered with silver, and they are drawn by a pair of stately oxen. After them succeed the rest of the factors, either in coaches or hackeries, or upon horses, which are kept by the Company to accommodate their President and people at these times, or whenever they fancy to take the air. In this pompous procession does the President, when he goes abroad, travel through the heart of the city.'

An equally pleasant picture of the lighter side of life in the Surat factory is given by the young German nobleman, Albert de Mandelslo, who visited Surat in April 1638 and made himself so popular that he was given a free passage home. Here is his account of his experiences :—

'At the entrance of the House,' he tells us, 'I met the President with his Second, that is to say, he who commands under him and in his absence, whose name was Mr Fremling, who received me with extraordinary kindness, and very civilly answered the compliment I made him, upon the freedom I took to make my advantage thereof. The President, who spoke Dutch very well, told me I was very welcome; that in the country where we then were, all Christians were obliged to assist one another, and that he was the more particularly obliged thereto as to what concerned me, in respect of the affection I would have expressed towards some of his nation at Ispahan. He thereupon brought me to his chamber where there was a collation ready. It consisted of fruits and preserves according to the custom of the country. As soon as we were set, he asked me what my design was, and understanding that I intended to return for Germany within twelve months, he told me I was come too late to get away that year, by reason no more ships would come that way, but that if I would stay with him five or six months, till there were a convenience of passage, he would take it kindly; that during that time he would contribute all he could to my divertisement: that he would find out a means how I might see the most eminent places in the country,—nay, that he would send some of his own nation along with me, who should find me those accommodations I could not otherwise hope for. This obliging discourse soon prevailed with me to accept of these proffers, so that he shewed me all the house that I might make choice of a convenient lodging, which I took near his Second's chamber. In the evening some merchants and others belonging to the President came and brought me from my chamber to supper into a

great hall, where was the Minister with about a dozen merchants, who kept me company, but the President and his Second supped not, as being accustomed to that manner of life, out of a fear of over-charging their stomachs, digestion being slowly performed by reason of the great heats, which are as troublesome there in the night time as in the day. After supper the Minister carried me into a great open gallery, where I found the President and his Second taking the coolness of the sea-air. This was the place of our ordinary rendezvous, where we met every night : to wit, the President, his Second, the principal Merchant, the Minister and myself ; but the other merchants came not, but when they were invited by the President. At dinner he kept a great table, of about fifteen or sixteen dishes of meat, besides the dessert.

'The respect and deference which the other merchants have for the President was very remarkable, as also the order which was there observed in all things, especially at Divine Service, which was said twice a day, in the morning at six, and at eight at night, and on Sundays thrice. No person in the house but had his particular function, and their certain hours, assigned them as well for work as recreation. Our divertisement was thus ordered. On Fridays, after prayers, there was a particular assembly, at which met with us three other merchants who were of kin to the President, and had left as well as he their wives in England, which day being that of their departure from England, they had appointed it for to make a commemoration thereof, and drink their wives' healths. Some made their advantage of this meeting to get more than they could well carry away, though every man was at liberty to drink what he pleased, and to mix the Sack as he thought fit, or to drink *Palepuntz*, which is a kind of drink consisting of *aqua vita*, rose-water, juice of citrons and sugar. At our ordinary meetings every day we took only *Thé*, which is commonly used all over the Indies, not only among those of the country, but also among the Dutch and English, who take it as a drug that cleanses the stomach, and digests the superfluous humours by a temperate heat particular thereto. The Persians instead of *Thé* drink their *Kahwa*, which cools and abates the natural heat which *Thé* preserves.

'The English have a fair garden without the city, whither we constantly went on Sundays after Sermon, and sometimes also on other days of the week, where our exercise was shooting at Butts, at which I made a shift to get a hundred Mamoudis (or five pound sterling) every week. After these divertisements we had a collation of fruit and preserves, and bathed ourselves in a tank or cistern which had five-foot water. Some Dutch gentlewomen served and entertained us with much civility. What troubled me most was that my little acquaintance with the English tongue made me incapable of conversation, unless it were with the President, who spoke Dutch.'

This, however, is rather a rosy picture of factory life in India. There is no doubt that Surat was the best conducted and most respectable of the factories. And even at Surat, under a weak or inefficient President, troubles arose. Under President Wylde (1628-30), for instance, we find the factory at a very low ebb. Discipline was poor, prayers were neglected, Sundays were spent in feasting, drinking, and gambling, and 'the beastly sin of whoredom and' most polluted filthy talk, the

daily common discourse at 'meals,' were rife. Bribes were freely taken by the authorities to ship private goods free of charge on the Company's vessels; business was left to shroffs and 'banyans,' who battered on the factory, and all, from the President downwards, indulged in private trade.

In Bombay, the "Luxury, Immodesty and prostitute Dissolution of Manners," is severely commented on by Ovington. In Madras "the itch of gaming hath spread itself, that even gentlewomen play for great sums." Another evil which did great harm was excessive drinking. The factory of Bencoolen in Sumatra, consisting of nineteen persons, consumed in the course of a year the amazing quantity of 74½ dozen bottles of wine, 50 dozen of French claret, 24½ dozen of Burton Ale, 2 pipes and 42 gallons of Madeira, 274 bottles of Toddy and 164 gallons of Goa arrack. Fortunately, the introduction of tea, then a novelty, helped to check this habit. We find Ovington waxing enthusiastic over this beverage, which was introduced into Surat by the Dutch. "With some hot spices intermixt and boiled

This is a better way of making tea than the alternative proposed by the Company for the Bencoolen factors. "A little tea boiled in the water doth admirably correct it and that water kept till cold and so drank as water would contribute to the health of those who used it" (1).

in the water," he says, "tea has the repute of prevailing against the headache, gravel, and griping in the guts, and 'tis generally drunk in India, either with sugar-candy, or by the more curious, with small conserved lemons. The frequent use of this innocent tea, and the perpetual perspiration which is caused by the heat, which is augmented by this liquor, are the reason why the gout, stone, agues, rheumatisms and catarrhs are rarely heard of in those parts." Tea was, however, very expensive: the price in 1660 was Rs 50 per pound.

It is curious to read that slavery was practised at many of the Company's factories. Slaves were imported from Madagascar, and when trained, fetched high prices. A good workman was worth as much as £80; others fetched from £60 to £25. We hear of 250 slaves being provided for Bombay in 1735, while in 1751, 600 are bought for Madras. The Company gave strict orders that they should be humanely treated, and a committee was appointed "to regulate their habitation, diet and clothing, in such a manner as may best contribute to their health and make their servitude easy to them."

Late in the seventeenth century, the monastic rules governing the factories were relaxed, and the factors were allowed, like the Dutch, to bring out their wives. President Blackman, 1652-5, was the first to enjoy this privilege. Later on, we hear of batches of young women coming out every year to seek husbands in Bombay. "The Company allow marriage to their factors," writes Ovington, "and liberty to young women to pass thither to gain husbands and raise their fortunes . . . A modish garb and mien is all that is expected from any women that pass thither, who are many times match'd to the chief merchants upon the place, and advance thereby their conditions to a very happy pitch. And considering what trouble attends the passage, especially of women, considering the hazard, as well as the length of the voyage, with some other casualties that sometimes happen on board, a modest woman may very well expect, without any great stock of honour or wealth, a

husband of repute and riches there, after she has run all this danger and trouble for him. And indeed the fond indulgence of the husbands, as well as their wealth, is another valuable recompense to women for the toil and trouble of the voyage."

Taken as a whole, the life in a factory in the East was both dangerous and wearisome. Between the departure of one annual "fleet" and the arrival of the next, the factors were entirely cut off from the outer world. The mortality especially in a place like Bombay, was very high. This was partly due, no doubt, to the excessive indulgence of the factors in meat and alcoholic liquor. "It is a wonder that any of you live six months to an end, or that there are not more quarrellings and duellings among you, if half the liquors he charges were really guzzled down," writes the Company with reference to the drink-bill already referred to. But Ovington tells us that even the chaplains, who may be presumed to have been sober-living men, were not exempt. He declined the chaplaincy of Bombay, because he was warned by "the immediate infallible sad fate I was under, like that of my predecessors: one of whom was interred a fortnight before this time and three or four more had been buried the preceding years: which common fatality had created a proverb among the English there, that *Two Monsoons are the age of a man*." Ovington's ship put into Bombay harbour for four months during the monsoon, and in that time twenty passengers and fifteen of the crew died. "Neither temperance, the most sovereign medicine nor the safest prescription in the physical art could restore the weakness of our languishing decay'd natures." Children suffered terribly. "Not one in twenty of them live to any maturity, or even beyond their infant days."

And this brings us to the last scene in the factors' life. One of the most interesting sights at Surat is the old English cemetery. The tombs in the English cemetery at Surat are unique in many ways. Nothing quite like them is found in Calcutta or Madras. The idea of erecting these imposing structures over their dead was no doubt copied from the Muhammadans: the factors were familiar, for example, with the tombs at Sarkej near Ahmadabad. The Dutch in their turn tried to out rival their English neighbours; the gigantic sarcophagus of Governor Henry Adrian Van Reede (or Rheede), 1691, is an obvious attempt to eclipse the mausoleum of the Oxindens. Another idea was to impress the natives. To us these cumbersome erections, with their mixture of Western and European architecture, seem quaint rather than imposing, but they were greatly admired in their day, and Ovington, Fryer, and other travellers in the seventeenth century refer to them with pride. They were evidently a show for sightseers, and were pointed out as standing monuments to the respectability and dignity of the Company's servants. They have suffered from vandalism and neglect; inscriptions have been removed, and the jovial Dutch commander's monument is no longer, as in Ovington's days, surmounted by 'three large punchbowls.'

'The manner of our burying is so decent that the natives (who are also very decent in that particular) though they may not come near a dead corpse by reason, they esteem it a polluting or defiling themselves, nay to some it is pollution to see, hear or speak of a corpse, yet they will behold our burials, and at the funeral for Sir George Oxinden the streets, balconys and tops of the houses were so full as they

could stand one by another. At the grave after the corpse is interred, there is money thrown and given to the poor people; and our burying place, which is large and spacious, is adorned with several great and many handsome tombs and monuments, which many of the great men of the country esteem worth their sight. The tomb of the Oxindens is, indeed, a portentous mausoleum. 'The height of this monument,' says Anderson, 'is forty feet; the diameter twenty-five; massive pillars support cupolâs' rising one above the other; and round their interiors are galleries reached by a flight of many steps. The body of an Indian Viceroy might have found here a worthy resting place; it is far too superb for the chief of a Factory, and his brother who was only a subordinate.' Christopher is commemorated by a cupola within the loftier and more extensive mausoleum raised in honour of his distinguished brother, the President. A pathetic little monument is that of the young son of Henry Gary, 'qui hinc emigravit ad eternas mansiones, 19 August Anno 1658, anno aetatis 14.' There are other tombs, ranging from 1708 to 1821. Many contain brief hints of forgotten tragedies 'Annesley, son of Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Brownrigg, aged 2 months; and Margaret, his mother, who fell a victim for him'. John Blyth, infant, buried on October 3, 1773, has the following:—

Happy the babe, who, privileged by fate  
To shorter labour and to higher weight,  
Received but yesterday the gift of breath,  
Ordered to-morrow to return to Death.

Other tombs have no inscriptions, perhaps because, as Bellasis conjectures, they were removed by the natives to be used as curry-stones. A large structure, without any distinguishing mark, is supposed to be the resting-place of the great Gerald Aungier. There is a graveyard at Swally, but it contains nothing of interest: it appears to be probable that Tom Coryat lies in an unmarked sepulchre at Surat. Close to Swally, at the mouth of the Tapti, is the curious structure known as Vaux's tomb, which is a landmark to vessels crossing the bar. Vaux was a protégé of Sir John Child, and was Deputy Governor. He and his wife were drowned near the spot in 1697.

**Discussion.**—Professor Rushbrook Williams pointed out that partiality for drinks was a well-known feature of factory life. In Calcutta the allowance for sherry in the days of the Company was 3 bottles per man per day and 1½ bottles per lady.

Archdeacon Firminger said that the paper had confirmed him in his belief about the great importance of the preparation of lists of European burial grounds and inscriptions on tombs. Some of the tombs in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa were very interesting. He cited instances of interesting tombs. In regard to the enormous Dutch tombs, it had been found that in some cases the coffin was not buried in the ground but placed inside the monument. In addition to the public burial grounds, tombs and even groups of European tombs existed beside the public roads and the river banks. These should be carefully listed. He referred to the great difficulty of transcribing inscriptions, and the necessity of comparing printed proofs with the inscriptions before any book is finally printed off. The late Dr C. R.

Wilson had brought out a very incomplete list of tombs for the old Province of Bengal, but his method seems to have been simply to print up the inscriptions supplied to him by subordinate Public Works Department officials. The result was that Dr Wilson's book is a museum of errors. Apparently Dr Wilson had not visited the cemeteries. If he had done so he could hardly have confused the burial grounds at Berhampur (Bengal) in the way he has done. As an instance of the necessity of comparing first printed proofs of inscriptions with the inscriptions, he mentioned the fact that in nearly every book in which the inscription on Cleveland's monument at Bhagalpur is quoted, the name is wrongly given as "Cleveland." He himself had given a large number of inscriptions in *Bengal Past and Present* from Dacca, Chittagong, Chapra, Ghazipur (2 cemeteries), Monghyr, Purneah, Dinapur (2 cemeteries), Malda, Gulzarbagh (Patna City), Arrah, (3 cemeteries), Gaya, Sherghati, Midnapur, Rajmahal, Chinsurah. It was difficult to find time for making transcriptions during his tours, and the work had to be done under a blazing sun and perspiration pouring down on one's paper. At Chinsurah one is soon surrounded by a company of monster apes !

Mr Dodwell said that the Madras tombs were also interesting.

## Political and Economic Condition of Gujarat during the Seventeenth Century.

(By M. S. Commissariat, M A, Professor, Gujarat College, Ahmadabad)

When I was honoured with an invitation to read a paper before the Indian Historical Records Commission, it appeared to me that, considering the centre at which the Commission was holding its session this year, it would be appropriate to select a subject related to the history of this province. Among the divisions of the Bombay Presidency, Gujarat may claim a certain pre-eminence from the historical standpoint. From the dawn of Indian history it has been the emporium of the sea-borne commerce of all Hindustan; and the wealth and prosperity of its cities, coupled with the high reputation for fertility which its soil enjoyed for many centuries, made it so delectable a province that its possession was coveted by every power that established itself as the paramount authority over the regions north of the Narbada.

At the commencement of the last quarter of the sixteenth century was effected that important revolution in Gujarat which brought to an end the dynasty of its independent Afghan Sultans, and ushered in the supremacy of the all-absorbing Mughal Empire. The lofty gateway of the Great Mosque at Fathpur-Sikri, known as the *Buland Darwaza*, completed in 1575, is believed to have been erected by Akbar to commemorate his conquest of Gujarat two years earlier, though definite evidence to support the hypothesis is wanting. From this date to the capture of Ahmadabad by the Marathas in 1758 Gujarat was administered by Mughal viceroys sent from Delhi.

If we turn to look for authorities to guide us in our survey of the province, we notice, in this respect, an important difference between the seventeenth and the



preceding two centuries. While for the period of the independent Saltanat we have in the 'Mirat-i-Sikandari,' in Ulugh Khani's Arabic History of Gujarat, and in Mir Abu Turab's little work, reliable and exhaustive native sources for our study, we find that in the seventeenth century, with the sole exception of the 'Mirat-i-Ahmadi,' native historians practically fail us. And yet, by a fortunate coincidence, foreign sources come to our help just at the time when we feel most in need of them, and a not contemptible amount of information may be gleaned from the writings of European travellers, and more especially from the early records of the East India Company. A small part of the invaluable documents preserved in the India Office archives has during the past twenty years been made available to us by the labours of Mr William Foster and his assistants.

## I

The great Akbar died in 1605 in the opening years of the seventeenth century, and our survey may therefore naturally begin with the reign of his successor Jahangir. The first outstanding event in the history of Gujarat during his reign, pregnant in its consequences, was the arrival at the end of 1608 at Suvali Road, the harbour of Surat, of the ship *Hector* of the third 'separate' voyage of the East India Company, and the landing of Captain Hawkins and his merchant companions on the historic shores of Hindustan as the representatives of an enterprising race from the remotest corners of Western Europe.

That the English merchants found considerable difficulty in obtaining permission to settle in the Mughal's dominions as traders is probably known to all. It is perhaps not equally well known that during the seven years that elapsed between 1608-15, the prospects of effecting a peaceful settlement appeared so gloomy, and the opposition so formidable, that more than once did the English factors seriously discuss the desirability of permanently and definitely abandoning the attempt, and retiring to other parts of the East Indies. The opposition came from two quarters: first, from the Portuguese, and secondly, from Muquarrab Khan, the Mughal Governor in charge of Surat and Cambay. We shall briefly sketch the character of each and show how England's connection with India, even in matters of trade, was primarily secured by her Sea Power.

The hostile personality of Muquarrab Khan, Governor of Surat from 1608 to 1615, looms like a dark shadow athwart the lives and fortunes of the first British factors at Surat. His original name was Shaikh Hassan, but he had been ennobled with the title of Muquarrab Khan for his high reputation in surgery. As the companion of Jahangir's childhood and youth, he stood in great esteem at Court, a fact which serves to explain the highhanded way in which at Surat he treated the new arrivals. The dread with which Muquarrab Khan inspired the English finds frequent expression in their letters to the Company and to each other. Thus one of them speaks of him as "our arch-enemy" Another writes: "Now, Muquarrab Khan, having these merchants in his power, began to show himself in his true colours, discovering the secret rancour of his poisoned stomach and the hidden malice which he beareth unto our nation." Again, "Since our coming hither, through the imbecility and weak judgment of Mucrob Khan, viceroy of Surat, whose disposition savours more

of child than man, being very vain and toyish in all his proceedings, we have had many delays in the discharge of our goods.”<sup>1</sup> The secret of the Surat governor’s unveiled hostility may be found in the fact that he was wholly in the interests of the Portuguese with whose agents in India he was extremely friendly. He had even been sent on a mission to Goa in 1612 and on his return had brought with him many rarities for his master, including some turkeys which were till then unknown in Hindustan.

As for the Portuguese, they made the most determined effort to oppose any breach in the monopoly of their trade in Western India which they had enjoyed for nearly a century, and they depended, for securing their purpose, on their unchallenged naval supremacy in the Indian seas, and on the great influence which they enjoyed at the Mughal Court ever since the days of the Jesuit missions to the Emperor Akbar. How great this influence was may be judged from the fact that, after a stay of nearly three years at Jahangir’s Court, Captain Hawkins had been forced at the end of 1611 to return to the coast, securing only an Armenian wife instead of a *farman* for the Surat factors.<sup>2</sup>

The two great naval powers of Europe of the time were thus anxious to try conclusions in Indian waters, and the opportunity came at the end of 1612 when Captain Thomas Best arrived off Suvali with two small ships. The Portuguese squadron, composed of four large galleys, 120 guns and 30 frigates, immediately swooped down upon them with the intent of capturing them, but in a running fight, extending over a month, Best completely routed the enemy. This victory broke the reputation which the Portuguese had won in India by the sea achievements of a hundred years, and made a deep impression on the governor and people of Surat who had been witness to the fight. In a treaty made with the governor the English received the formal sanction for a factory at Surat and at three other places around the Gulf of Cambay; and this agreement is said to have been duly ratified by an Imperial *farman* delivered to Captain Best at Suvali in January 1613. In the words of Sir William Hunter, “From this Imperial decree our legal settlement on the Indian continent dates.”<sup>3</sup>

To Captain Best, then, has generally been awarded the sole credit of having laid the foundation of the English power at Surat. This claim, however, deserves considerable qualification in the light of later and more accurate information. It now appears that Best was wrong when he imagined that he had succeeded in procuring the Imperial sanction to the treaty made with Muquarrab Khan at Surat. In fact the English never saw the Persian rendering of the *farman*, and its validity was at a later date denied both at the Court and at Ahmadabad. While acknowledging then the great services rendered by this valiant merchant mariner in demolishing the maritime reputation of the Portuguese, it must not be forgotten that the very existence of an English factory at Surat during these critical years was due perhaps more to Thomas Aldworth, Chief of the factory at Surat, than to Captain

<sup>1</sup> *Letters received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, Vol. II, pp. 168, 240, 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters Received*, Vol. I, pp. 282, 158.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Hunter, *History of British India*, Vol. I, p. 304.

Best. One of the factors in India writes: "The greatest cause and means of our settling here was Mr Aldworth, for our general (*i.e.*, Captain Best) would have gone three or four times and left this place, . . . but Mr Aldworth stood out with him and would not go aboard."<sup>1</sup> Another is equally emphatic—"Had not Mr. Aldworth directly refused to follow his will, we had left this place and trade, as letters extant may prove."<sup>2</sup> Best, however, had the advantage of returning to England; where his supposed success in connection with the *farman* gained him for a time considerable favour. He had the opportunity of telling his story first, and consequently less than justice has hitherto been done to the energy and perseverance of Thomas Aldworth, the first English agent in Western India, and hence styled the official ancestor of the Governors of Bombay. Aldworth was not destined, however, to return to his native land. In 1615 he went on business from Surat to Ahmadabad where he was seized with a dangerous illness, and he had a presentiment that his end was approaching in a foreign land. Longing for the cool breezes of the coast, he asked his attendants to carry him to Surat, but the effort proved too much for him and he expired on the way at the village of Nadiad, now the largest town in the Kaira District. His friends intended to bring his remains to Ahmadabad in order to perpetuate his memory. But this step seems never to have been taken, and to this day the exact place and time of Aldworth's death have remained unknown.

During the autumn of 1613, within a year after Captain Best's memorable victory, the Portuguese brought on themselves the wrath of the Mughal Empire by a wanton act of plunder and terrorism which was in keeping with their general policy in the East. This was the capture near Surat of a large Mughal ship of about 12,000 tons with a rich cargo. As some of the most important nobles at the Court at Agra, including the Great Mughal's mother (who was a great adventurer), were interested in the cargo, which was valued at £100,000 sterling, this predatory act of the Portuguese provoked extreme resentment, and the Emperor determined to inflict a signal punishment. The Mughal patched up a truce with his enemy the Sultan of Ahmadnagar in order that the Imperial and Deccani troops might carry out a joint attack on all the Portuguese forts in Western India from Diu to Goa.

The details of the conflict between the Mughal power in Gujarat and their erstwhile friends, the Portuguese, may be gathered from the letters of the East India Company's servants. Muquarrab Khan, who seems to have been on a visit to the Court, was instructed to proceed to the coast, and orders were issued to seize the goods and persons of all the Portuguese in the Empire.<sup>3</sup> At Surat their church-doors were sealed up, the exercise of their religion forbidden, and a Jesuit of the name of Jerome Xavier, a grandson of the sister of St. Francis,<sup>4</sup> who was high in favour at Court, was sent down to the governor of Surat "to do with him as he shall see good." As the Mughal naval power was contemptible, active steps

<sup>1</sup> *Letters Received*, Vol. I, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters Received*, Vol. II, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> *Letters Received*, Vol. II, p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> *The Embassy of Sir T. Roe to India*, Ed. by W. Foster, Vol. II, p. 313n.

were taken to lay siege by land to Diu, Daman, Bassein and Chaul. At the same time Muquarrab Khan made an appeal to the Dutch at Masulipatam (who had a factory at Surat and whose stock was then in the Shahbunder's hands) to come up for help, promising them Daman when it was taken by the besieging Mughal forces.<sup>1</sup>

The Portuguese tried every means to effect a reconciliation, offering to restore both the ship and the goods. But the offer was rejected. In revenge they sent frigates to Gogha burning 120 ships (of which ten were of a large size) as also the greater part of the city. They also made raids all over the coast, and, pouncing down upon Broach, set fire to many of the houses in the suburbs, as also to the ships they found in the port. There is ample evidence to show that the Mughal governor of Surat was in daily fear of an attack on the city, and was anxious to secure from Captain Nicholas Downton (who had recently arrived at that port) a written undertaking that he would fight with the Portuguese if they should attack the town, and also help him with his ships to capture the castle of Daman. Downton demurred to both requests on the ground that he was prevented by his commission to make war on the Portuguese unless they first gave him cause. Muquarrab Khan showed his resentment at this by threats to drive the merchants out with all their goods. At the same time, convinced by Downton's inaction that resistance was hopeless, he actually offered to conclude a peace with the Portuguese viceroy, which would almost certainly have involved the expulsion of the English from Surat. This catastrophe was only prevented by the Portuguese viceroy rejecting the terms as unsatisfactory.<sup>2</sup>

It was clear to the Portuguese that their success in the struggle with the Mughal Empire depended on their ability to destroy Captain Downton's small fleet of four ships, which alone stood between them and the attack on Surat. But the lessons of the conflict with Best had not been lost on them and they decided to equip a great force to crush once and for good the insolent intruders into the Asiatic seas. By January 1615 their armada arrived from Goa commanded by the viceroy in person. It included six great galleons, five smaller ships, and sixty frigates or rowed barges. In men and guns the total strength of the invaders amounted to 2,600 Europeans, 234 guns, and native crews to the number of 6,000 to sail the ships. The English were cruelly overmatched, with only 4 vessels, 80 guns, and 400 men. In the final action, in spite of defective strategy, they scored a decisive victory, and the armada sailed away.<sup>3</sup>

Downton's victory at Suvali Road in 1615 may be regarded as the sequel to Captain Best's in the same waters less than three years before, and the consequences were momentous. It proclaimed to the native powers that the command of the sea had definitely passed from the Portuguese to the English in Eastern waters. From this time onward the fortunes of the English factors in Western India were secure, for, as long as their ships lay at anchor at Surat bar, no amount of hostility from

<sup>1</sup> *Letters Received*, Vol. II, pp. 150, 171.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters Received*, Vol. II, pp. 150, 229, 155, 168, 149.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Hunter, *History of British India*, Vol. I, pp. 327--26, and *Letters Received*, Vol. III, Int. xiv.

the governor could prevent them from gaining that commercial footing which was all they wanted. No doubt much persecution and insolence remained yet to be encountered; no doubt the naval warfare with the Portuguese was to continue in the Indian seas for half a century more; *but the crisis had passed*. The foundations of British India had been laid. Recent critics would, perhaps, question this assertion. It may be, as they urge, that from the political standpoint the cession of Bombay was a more pregnant event than the defeat of the Portuguese fleets at Suvali. It may be that the impulsion to Empire came from the other side of India. But let it not be forgotten that the momentous issue that was decided in 1615 was whether the Company's merchants were or were not finally to abandon the attempt of trade settlements at *any* part of the Indian Peninsula.

## II

Let me now turn, gentlemen, to another landmark in the history of Gujarat, *viz.*, the famous assemblage of 1618 at Ahmadabad where Jahangir halted for nearly five months during the course of his tour through Malwa and Gujarat. The long period the Emperor spent here, the personages who accompanied him, and their position in the Empire, render this visit one of the most interesting episodes in the history of the province. All the potentates of the Empire were gathered in this imperial city. Nur Jahan was here, the first Mughal Empress of India, whose face was her fortune, and whose name was engraved on the coins of the realm. Here were also Itimad-ud-Daula, the Empress's father, and her brother, the all-powerful minister Āsaf Khan. Sir Thomas Roe was here with his suite and his worthy chaplain, the Rev. Edward Terry. So was also Prince Khurram, with his newly acquired title of Shah Jahan. "Shah Jahan," says the late Mr James Douglas, "it is not for nothing thou art in Ahmadabad. The living shall praise thee yet, and on the Jumna men from far off America and Australia shall marvel at thy works and thrill with ecstasy at thy dream in marble." "Is it too much to suppose," continues the same eminent writer, "that it was here that the master-builder imbibed the elements of his taste which was to display such glorious results elsewhere—the bud was here, the blossom and fruit to be in Agra. Everything has a beginning. Greece before Rome, Damascus before Cairo, Ahmadabad before Agra." Well may the capital of Gujarat be proud of having directed the natural bent of the most magnificent Emperor of India.

Jahangir arrived at Ahmadabad in April 1618, at the beginning of the hot weather, and was confirmed in his resolve to pass the rainy season here by the news that plague had broken out at Agra. But if the Emperor thought of thus escaping the calamity he was mistaken. Soon after his arrival, it broke out in the city with great virulence. Jahangir himself was down with it, and so was also Prince Khurram. Some idea of the havoc it must have wrought in the city may be formed from the casualties in the small suite of the British Ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, the details of which are thus given by his chaplain Edward Terry in his "Voyage to East India":

"The city Amadavar (at our being there with the King) was visited with this pestilence in the month of May (1618), and our family was not exempted from this most uncomfortable visitation; for within the space of nine

"days seven persons that were English of our family were taken away by it; and none of those which died lay sick above twenty hours, and the major part well, and sick, and dead in twelve hours. As our surgeon (who was there all the physician we had), and he led the way falling sick at midday, and the following mid-night dead. And there were three more that followed him, one immediately after the other, who made as much haste to the grave as he had done; and the rest went after them, within that space of time I named before. And all those that died in our family of this pestilence had their bodies set all on fire by it, so soon as they were first visited; and when they were dying, and dead, broad spots of a black and blue colour appeared on their breasts; and their flesh was made so extremely hot by their most high distemper that we who survived could scarce endure to keep our hands upon it. It was a most sad time, a fiery trial indeed. All our family (my Lord Ambassador only excepted) were visited with this sickness."<sup>1</sup>

The Emperor evidently did not enjoy his stay in the capital of Gujarat. Tired with the dust, disgusted with the hot winds, and altogether peevish with the fever and the pestilence, he gave vent to his feelings by heaping bad names on the city in its day of sore affliction. In his "Memoirs" he gives free expression to his fretful humour:

"I am at a loss to conceive what beauty and excellence the founder of this city saw in this wretched land that he was induced to build a city here; and how, after him, others also should spend the days of their precious life in this dirty place. Hot winds always blow here, and there is very little water. I have already mentioned that it is very sandy, and that the atmosphere is loaded with dust. . . . I have previously called this city Gardabad, 'dust-town.' Now I do not know what to call it—whether Samumistan, 'the home of the hot winds'; Bimaristan, 'the abode of sickness'; Zaqqumdar, 'thorn-brake'; or Jahannamabad, 'Hell-town,' for all these names are appropriate."<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the heat and of the weakness consequent on his fever, Jahangir was not unmindful of his duty, and sat for two or three hours every day at the Jharokha or audience-window of the royal palace in the Bhadra (facing the river Sabarmati), to administer justice. During this period Rao Bihari, the ruler of Cutch, and the greatest zamindar under the Mughal Suba of Gujarat, came to pay his respects to the Emperor. Jahangir was very gratified at the honour thus paid to him, as none of the Rao's ancestors had ever before come to render homage to the Sultans of Gujarat. The Rao was over 80 years of age, but vigorous, and in full enjoyment of his powers of body and mind.

Jahangir was at this time informed by his private librarian that the records of the Imperial autobiography (the Jahangirnama) had been completed for the first twelve years of the reign. He ordered these records to be bound in a single volume,

<sup>1</sup> E. Terry, *Voyage to East India* (Ed. 1777), pp. 226-27.

<sup>2</sup> Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, Vol. VI, pp. 358-59.

and a number of copies prepared of the same, to be presented to trusted servants of the throne or to be distributed in the cities of the Empire "for study and example." The very first copy, when ready, the Emperor presented to Shah Jahan, at this time his favourite son, inscribing therein the date and place at which it was given. Some days before this Abu-l-Hasan, the court painter, who had the title of Nadirn-z-Zaman ("the wonder of the age"), had made a present to the Emperor of a painting, representing the Imperial accession to the throne, to be placed as a frontispiece to the Jahangirnama. Jahangir, with his usual indulgence in superlatives, describes the picture as one of the *chefs d'œuvre* of the age. In fact he had an excellent judgment on the fine arts and prided himself on being a *connoisseur*. Here is his modest description of his abilities :

"As regards myself, my liking for painting and my practice in judging it "have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought before me, either "of deceased artists or of those of the present day, without the names being "told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and "such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each "face be the work of a different master, I can discover which face is the "work of each of them. If any other person has put in the eye and "eyebrow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is, and "who has painted the eye and eyebrows."<sup>1</sup>

The festival of the *Shāb-i-Barāt* of the Hijri year 1027, A.D. 1618, was celebrated by the Emperor in the capital of Gujarat with befitting magnificence. He ordered the steps of the Kankariya Tank and the buildings and palaces around the lake to be illumined with variegated lanterns, to which were added all kinds of artifices that are practicable with lamps and fireworks. Jahangir went to enjoy the sight at night, and, no doubt, must have invited all the citizens to witness the illuminations. His special domestics were on that night "regaled with cups of joy," as he says in his "Memoirs." Indeed, to the Merry Monarch of India, wine and joy were convertible terms. The climate of Gujarat, however, did not quite agree with his usual indulgences in this matter, and, by the advice of his physicians, he made a slight reduction in the daily potation, to wit, from six cups of 45 *tolas* every evening to six cups of 37½ *tolas*. This reduction by 7½ *tolas*, or the weight of one cup, was gradually effected in the course of a week.

On September 2, 1618, the royal court left Ahmadabad on the return journey to Agra, the procession taking the usual route from the palace to the Kankariya Tank, the Emperor scattering money all the way. The hurry of official tours was fortunately unknown, and the journey from Ahmadabad to Agra, which at the present day would be completed by rail in about 24 hours, was leisurely accomplished in the course of seven months. The very first halt was at Kankariya itself where the Emperor stayed for five days, during which he celebrated, in the usual manner, the 50th anniversary of his birthday according to the solar calculation. He was weighed against gold and other valuables, and scattered pearls and golden roses among his courtiers.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Jahangir (Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri)* by Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. II, pp. 20-21.

The camp next moved on towards Mahmūdabad where Jahangir halted for more than ten days, partly because he was pleased with the water and climate of the place, which he found superior to that of Ahmadabad, and partly because it was impossible to proceed further as the rainy season was not yet over and the river Mahi was in flood. Here he dismissed the local potentates and zamindars who had accompanied him from the capital. Among these were Rao Bihari, the aged ruler of Cutch, and Saiyid Muhammad, the head of the Bukhari Saiyids of Gujarat and great-grandson of Saint Shah Alam. Before parting, the Emperor offered to Saiyid Muhammad whatever boon he desired, taking an oath on the Quran to grant it. The Saiyid, who appears to have been a gentleman of taste, asked for a copy of the Quran that it might be always with him, and that the merit of reading it might accrue to His Majesty. Jahangir presented him with a small elegantly bound volume which was 'the wonder of the age.'

Here then we may take leave of Jahangir on his leisurely progress to the north, hunting and hawking on the way, and receiving embassies and distinguished visitors from all parts of the Empire who came to "kiss the threshold." To numismatists in particular Jahangir's stay in Gujarat has an importance all its own. It was about this time that the Emperor conceived the idea of issuing the famous Zodiacal coins which form a series quite the most beautiful of all issued during his reign. On these celebrated coins, instead of the name of the month of issue, there was stamped the figure of the sign of the Zodiac corresponding to the particular month. While the issue of the Zodiacal gold muhrs was seemingly reserved mainly for the mint at Agra, we find that it was during his five months' stay at Ahmadabad that most of the Zodiacal rupees were struck at the mint of that city. Jahangir in his "Memoirs" claims the issue of these coins to be specially his own invention, and, on the whole, we may accept his statement, particularly as the artless story recorded by Tavernier that these Zodiacal muhrs and rupees were struck by Nur Jahan during the four and twenty hours that Jahangir permitted her to reign in his stead, has been definitely consigned to the domain of fiction.

Let us now turn to consider the famous historical tradition to the effect that, during the imperial stay in Gujarat, Jahangir appointed Nur Jahan "Lady Governor" of Ahmadabad and subahdar of the province. This tradition, first mentioned in the pages of M. Anquetil du Perron in 1771, was taken up by Robert Orme, the historiographer of the East India Company, at the end of the eighteenth century, was reproduced by Henry George Briggs in his "Cities of Gujarashtra" in the middle of the nineteenth century, and was handed down to us by Sir James Campbell in the Ahmadabad volume of his monumental *Gazetteers* and by Mr James Douglas in his charming book "Bombay and Western India." That so many and distinguished writers should have unquestioningly accepted as history this tradition need cause no surprise if we remember how extraordinary was the influence in state affairs which Nur Jahan exercised during her husband's reign, and how intimately she was associated with the political affairs of the Empire.

The credit of exposing the historical error on which this tradition rests was reserved for the opening years of the present century and the scholarship of the late



Dr Geo. P. Taylor. And here, gentlemen, let me pause a while to offer a tribute to his memory, for it is not twelve months since he has been removed from our midst. Nor can I offer it before an audience more appreciative of his labours than that which I have the honour of addressing to-day. During his long stay in Gujarat, extending over nearly half a century, Dr Taylor brought his brilliant abilities to bear on the study of the history and the coins of the province, and his services were recognised by scholars in his election to the Presidentship of the Indian Numismatic Society, and later on, by Government, in the award of the Kaisar-i-Hind Gold Medal at the hands of the King-Emperor during the Imperial Durbar at Delhi in 1911. Had his life been spared longer, or had he not deliberately sacrificed the interests of history and of numismatics to the higher call of religion and theology, he would, I venture to say, have transmitted his name to posterity as the ablest and the most graceful writer on the History of Gujarat.

To revert to our subject. It now appears that the whole stream of evidence in favour of Nur Jahan's governorship of Ahmadabad can be traced back to a single source, *viz.*, Anquetil du Perron, who in turn rests for authority upon a single coin struck at Ahmadabad during the 13th regnal year of Jahangir, *and this coin he has misread.* Dr Taylor says, "As a student for some years now of the Mughal coins of Gujarat, I cordially acknowledge the large service they can render to the historian. Coins, rightly read, help in the making of history, but wrongly read, they help in the making of fiction. M. Anquetil du Perron has misread the legend on the coin, and his statement that Nur Jahan was at one time Lady Governor of Ahmadabad is but the consequent fiction. While now writing, I hold in my left hand a rupee of the very type described in detail by M. Anquetil du Perron. His, I doubt not, was a specimen inferior to mine, otherwise to have fallen into so many mistakes in deciphering it had been impossible."<sup>1</sup> According to Dr Taylor, then, the true reading of the coin is not what has found currency for a hundred and thirty years, but as follows :—

Zar Ahmadabad ra dad zewar

Jahangir Shah Shahanshah Akbar, 1027.

"To the gold of Ahmadabad gave adornment

King Jahangir, son of Akbar, king of kings, 1027."

### III

I have related, at perhaps more than ordinary length, the events connected with Jahangir's visit to Gujarat, but considering their importance it would have been impossible to dismiss them in a shorter space. Let me turn now to the next landmark in the History of Gujarat. In the third year of the golden reign of Shah Jahan the province was afflicted by that terrible calamity which was long remembered by its people as the "Satyasio Kal." The monsoon of 1630 failed, and the province was plunged into a cataclysmic famine. The next year the rains came, but in such overwhelming abundance as to destroy all the crops, and to accentuate thereby the already prevailing distress. Many of you must be familiar with the graphic

<sup>1</sup> Dr Geo. P. Taylor's article in "East and West" Nov. 1901.

description of the calamity given in the "Badshahnama" of Abdu-l Hamid. It will, however, bear repetition :—

"Life was offered for a loaf, but none would buy ; rank was to be sold for a cake, but none cared for it. For a long time dog's flesh was sold for goat's flesh, and the pounded bones of the dead were mixed with flour and sold. Destitution at length reached such a pitch that men began to devour each other, and the flesh of a son was preferred to his love."<sup>1</sup>

Every word of this description, be it said to the credit of the Persian historian is borne out by independent and contemporary sources. Let me quote before you the vivid account of the effects of the calamity at Surat given by a Dutch factor of that city in his letter to a member of the Dutch Council at Batavia, dated December 11-21, 1631 :—

"And going ashore to a village called Swalley, we saw there many people that perished of hunger ; and whereas heretofore there were in that town 260 families, there was not remaining alive about ten or eleven families. And as we travelled from thence to the city of Surat, many dead bodies lay upon the highway ; and where they died, they must consume of themselves, being nobody that would bury them. And when we came to the city of Surat we hardly could see any living persons, where heretofore was thousands ; and there is so great a stench of dead persons that the sound people that came into the town were with the smell infected ; and at the corners of the streets the dead lay twenty together, one upon the other, nobody burying them. The mortality in this town is and hath been so great that there have died about 30,000 people. The English house and ours is as if one came into the hospital of Batavia. There is dead of the English factors ten or eleven persons, and of ours three. Those that remain alive of the English are very sorrowful for the death of Mr Rastell, their President, who died about twenty days since. In these parts there may not be any trade expected these three years. No man can go in the streets, but must resolve to give great alms or be in danger of being murdered, for the poor people cry with a loud voice : ' give us sustenance or kill us.' The fair fields hereabout are all drowned with great floods and the fruits of the earth clean washed away with these waters. The waters are so high in the city, by reason of the floods, that we could pass from one house to the other, but by boats ; which was never known in the memory of any living man."<sup>2</sup>

Corroborative details may also be gathered from the Journal of Peter Mundy, a factor in the service of the East India Company from 1628-1633, whose travels have been recently published by the Hakluyt Society under the editorship of Sir Richard Temple. Mundy saw the havoc wrought in Gujarat by famine on his way from Surat to Burhanpur in 1630, and on his return two years later he records :—

"The famine itself swept away more than a million of the common or poorer sort. After which, the mortality succeeding did as much more among rich

<sup>1</sup> Elliot and Dowson, *History of India*, Vol. VII, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> *English Factories in India*, Ed. Foster, (1630-33), pp. 180-81.

"and poor. Women were seen to roast their children; men travelling in the way were laid hold of to be eaten, and having cut away much of his flesh he was glad if he could get away and save his life, others killed outright and devoured. A man or woman no sooner dead but they were cut in pieces to be eaten. Thus much by common report (because I was not present)."

The economic effects of the mortality caused by famine and the consequent pestilence may be gathered from the letters of the factors of the East India Company and the Journal of Peter Mundy. "This," says a factor, "that was in a manner the garden of the world is now turned into a wilderness, having few or no men left to manure their ground nor to labour in any profession." Thus Ahmadabad, that yielded 3,000 or more bales of indigo per year, was hardly able to supply 300. This was due, not to the want of a plentiful growth, but because there were "few men living to gather it," but lying "rotting on the ground." The mortality among the weavers at Broach was so heavy that whereas they used to supply the Surat factory with 30 to 50 score of pieces of cloth a day, they could now scarcely supply 20 or 30 pieces.

#### IV

Let me now briefly refer to the connection of the great Emperor Aurangzeb with the province of Gujarat before he waded to the throne through a sea of blood. As is well known, he was born at the town of Dohad, now in the Paneh Mahals District of the Northern Division, and for centuries the most important frontier town between Gujarat and Malwa. The happy event took place on November 3, 1618, in the camp of his grandfather, Jahangir, who was then on his march from Gujarat to Ujjain. As Mr Irvine says, "It was Aurangzeb's fate to be born and to die in a camp, and to pass many years of his life in one." Jahangir was naturally very pleased, and thus records the incident in his diary, "On the eve of Sunday, the 12th of the Ilahi month of Aban, in the 13th year from my accession, the giver of blessings gave my prosperous son Shah Jahan a precious son by the daughter of Asaf Khan. I hope that his advent may be auspicious and blessed to this everlasting state."<sup>1</sup> The visitor to Dohad may yet see the peaked masonry tomb over Aurangzeb's after-birth with its mosque and enclosure. Many, many years later the thoughts of the aged Aurangzeb, in the midst of the worries and disappointments of his Deccan campaigns, and in the 86th year of his age, turned with longing to the far distant place of his birth, as may be seen from a letter written by him in 1704 to his eldest son Princee-Muhammad-Muazzam, then viceroy of Gujarat. The letter says:—

"My son of exalted rank, the town of Dohad, one of the dependencies of Gujarat, is the birth-place of this sinner. Please consider a regard for the inhabitants of that town incumbent on you, and continue in office its decrepit old Faujdar. In regard to that old man listen not to the whisperings of those suffering from the disease of self-interest: Verily

---

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Jahangir*, by Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. II, p. 47.

"they have a sickness in their hearts and Allah addeth to their ailments." <sup>1</sup>

In 1645, when he was in his 27th year, Prince Aurangzeb was appointed by his father to the responsible post of viceroy of Gujarat, and the events which happened at Ahmadabad during his brief viceroyalty are of special interest as showing how even at this early age his character manifested that religious intolerance and puritanical zeal which subsequently embittered his life and paved the way for the decline of his Empire. As the result of some religious disputes a quarrel arose at his capital between the Hindu and Muslim inhabitants. The Prince, thereupon, ordered a newly built temple of Chintaman near Saraspur, a suburb of the city to the east, to be desecrated by slaughtering a cow in it. The temple was then converted into a mosque, until the more tolerant Shah Jahan ordered its restoration to the Hindus. In another incident that took place not long after, both the contending parties were Muhammadans—on one side the orthodox believers and on the other the followers of the Mahdavia sect in Ahmadabad. The occasion for the tumult was that a man named Saiyid Raju, a follower of the prince, had gone over to the side of the heretics. The military, under the direct orders of the Prince, who was enraged at this fact, attacked and slaughtered the representatives of the offending sect. The spirit of the murdered Saiyid Raju, under the name of Raju Shahid, or Raju the Martyr, is still worshipped by the Pinjaras and Mansuris of Ahmadabad. Aurangzeb was soon after recalled to the capital, very probably in consequence of the part he had taken in promoting both the disturbances mentioned above.

#### IV

Here then, at nearly the middle of the seventeenth century, we may stop in our review of the principal landmarks in the political history of Gujarat. Of the economic condition of the province, and the general prosperity of its people, we have unfortunately no direct evidence available, either from Indian or from foreign sources. The Persian historians, who delighted in the record of the splendours of courts and camps, and of victories over infidels, naturally considered any notice of the life of the poor as below the dignity of the historic muse. On the other hand, the letters of the English factors in Western India are primarily devoted to mercantile interests, and their references to the political or economic condition of the country in which they lived are practically made unconsciously in so far as they affected for better or for worse the success of their trade. These indirect references that we are enabled to glean from a perusal of the Company's records are, however, sufficient to justify us in pronouncing the opinion that the people of Gujarat must have enjoyed, on the whole, a very satisfactory degree of material prosperity during the first half of the seventeenth century. We may even go further and say that, at no period immediately preceding or succeeding this century, could the lot of the people have been more prosperous. The political anarchy which overtook Gujarat after the death of Sultan Bahadur in 1537, extended, with hardly an interruption, till the final defeat and death of the last Sultan Muzaffar III in 1592, and it was not till the commencement

<sup>1</sup> Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 276 n.

of the seventeenth century that the Mughal sway in Gujarat may be said to have been placed on a stable basis. From this time the province enjoyed nearly a century of tranquil prosperity, disturbed occasionally only by a severe famine or the predatory incursions of Shivaji, until the weakening of imperial authority after the death of Aurangzeb made the way clear for the anarchy that accompanied the gradual establishment of Maratha rule in Gujarat.

The two great sources that contributed to the wealth and prosperity of the province during the period under review were foreign commerce and domestic manufactures, and a tremendous fillip was given to both these factors by the arrival of the English and the Dutch merchants at Surat. The foreign demand for many of the raw materials of the country was no doubt great; but far greater was the demand for the manufactured commodities of the province which were eagerly purchased for the consumption of the people of England and of Europe, as also for being exported to the Eastern Archipelago to be there sold in return for the much-prized spices. The regular and profitable employment which the production of these manufactures must have given to the millions of Gujarat, and particularly to the citizens of Ahmadabad, Baroda, Broach, Cambay, Surat and Navsari, may be readily imagined. The great famine of Gujarat during 1630-2 came no doubt to interrupt grievously both the agricultural and manufacturing prosperity of the country. But there is reason to believe that, in spite of the fact that millions perished in the absence of an organised and scientific system of famine-relief (such as we find evolved in our own times), those who survived, at least in the towns, did not take long to recover from the effects of the calamity.

Some reference to a few of the chief articles of manufacture in Gujarat at this period will not be out of place. Among the cotton manufactures, the principal place was undoubtedly taken by the far-famed calicoes, which were produced in every city in the province, and with particular excellence at Broach. Tavernier notices the fact that the river Narbada at Broach was widely renowned for centuries as possessing a peculiar property for bleaching calicoes which were brought here for the purpose from all parts of the Mughal Empire.<sup>1</sup> This finds confirmation in a letter written by the President of the Factory at Surat to the Company at the end of 1639. It says that for the bleaching process "that town (Broach) yet retains its wonted perfection and has the preference before all other places, although the ancient making of calicoes be somewhat adulterated."<sup>2</sup>

The famous village of Sarkhej near Ahmadabad, celebrated during the preceding two centuries as the sanctuary of Shaikh Ahmad Khattu, and as the final resting place of several of the Sultans of Gujarat, acquires, strangely enough, an added significance in the seventeenth century as the principal centre in the province for the manufacture of indigo. In fact Biānā near Agra was the only other centre in the Mughal Empire that could at all compete with Sarkhej for the excellence of the commodity manufactured there. The result was a large export trade which must have been productive of much prosperity to those engaged in the industry. The East India

<sup>1</sup> Tavernier's *Travels in India*, Ed. Ball, Vol. I, p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> *English Factories in India, 1637-41*, p. 196.

Company's merchants at one time attempted to manufacture indigo themselves in their factory at Ahmadabad, but had to abandon the attempt as the cost of production was found to be higher than the price at which they could purchase it. The fact that both the English and Dutch factors were eagerly competing with each other for this commodity led the native manufacturers of the produce at Sarkhej to make the fullest use of their monopoly, and to adulterate it, or, as the factors write, to "basely sophisticate" it, by the intermixture of oil and sand. The English merchants brought this fact in 1640 to the notice of Azam Khan, the famous viceroy of Gujarat from 1635 to 1642. Of the unbending severity and stern repression that characterised the rule of this viceroy we have ample evidence in the pages of the German traveller Mandelslo. Nor was the viceroy behind his reputation on the present occasion. Here is the description, given us by the factors, of what he did. He "apprehended the abuse so truly that he caused more than 100 of these indico makers to be convented; upon whom after he had discharged a whole volley of "revilings for their couzenage, he threatened no less than death to him that should "hereafter dare to mix or sand, oyle, or any other substance than what nature gives "to indico."<sup>1</sup>

Among the minerals purchased by the English in Gujarat we have many references to borax and saltpetre, both of which were refined in the factory at Ahmadabad. The latter article was particularly in demand by the Company as the English Government wanted a constant supply of it to carry on the war against the Dutch, saltpetre being an important ingredient in gunpowder.<sup>2</sup> It is particularly interesting to note that Prince Aurangzeb, when he was viceroy of Gujarat in 1645, laid a special embargo against the sale of this commodity to the factors as merchandise. The reason for this opposition has been attributed to the Prince's religious scruples. A factor writes in 1646: "We find an unexpected impediment in the saltpetre provided raw, to be refined in Ahmadabad. . . . The Prince (very superstitious), possessed by some of his churchmen that it is not lawful for him to suffer us to export that specie, which peradventure may be employed against Moors, he hath strictly inhibited its delivery unto us."<sup>3</sup> That this prohibition against the export of saltpetre was extended by the Emperor himself for many years after Prince Aurangzeb had severed his connection with Gujarat, leads us to the conclusion that the Prince's bigotry was not the sole cause of the embargo, but that the Mughal Court was shrewd enough to appreciate the unwisdom of permitting so important an ingredient in the munitions of war to leave its dominions, and thus averted the possibility of its ever being utilised against itself. A Surat factor, writing in 1653, says: "The governor of Ahmadabad, pretending orders from the King to that effect, refuses to allow any saltpetre to be exported thence, and has further stopped all coming through from Agra."<sup>4</sup> Again, a letter from Surat of 1654 says: "As regards the saltpetre detained at Ahmadabad, they took the opportunity of Shaistah Khan's approaching departure to negotiate its release; and on their abating over

<sup>1</sup> *English Factories in India*, 1637-41, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1651-54, p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1646-50, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1651-54, p. 215.

100*l.* in the price of the tapestry received by the *Smyrna Merchant*, he allowed them to bring it to Surat just before the rains. The purchase of the further quantity required by the Company was deferred until the arrival of the Khan's successor, Murad Bakhsh, the fourth son of the king. He gave them leave to buy what they would, and thereupon they contracted for a quantity. However, when part had been received and was being refined, an order came from the king's Diwan prohibiting them from buying or transporting any saltpetre from thence."<sup>1</sup> In fact any quantity of this valuable commodity which the English merchants were enabled to send home was obtained either by the connivance of provincial magnates or by purchases in the Deccan and in other parts outside the Mughal's jurisdiction.

Neither the time at my disposal, nor, I am sure, your patience, gentlemen, will permit me to prolong this inquiry any further. I shall therefore close by inviting your attention to a 'theory of the drain' which held sway for more than 18 centuries, and which was in its way the very opposite of that with which we are familiar in India. Already the Emperor Tiberius, at the commencement of the first century A.D., had complained of the continual drain of the precious metals from Europe to the East in payment for the stimulants, the narcotics and the luxuries of Asia, and this process was to go on for well-nigh two thousand years. Thus, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, do we find the Directors of the Company in London protesting against their factors' never-ceasing demand for the shipment of silver from England to meet their purchases in India. The Company suggested that they should find the specie in India itself by promoting the sale of English commodities. To this the merchants replied that as for English broadcloth it did not suit the habits of the people, the principal use to which it was put being for adorning the imperial elephants, and that the only goods in demand were some light cloths of pleasant colours, swords, looking-glasses, lead, tin and quicksilver, and mechanical toys. All that they could do, therefore, was to export Indian calicoes to the Spice Islands and there get some of the silver with which to purchase goods for the English market. Sir Thomas Roe at Ajmer took up the cudgels on behalf of the Company in 1616, and in his correspondence with the factors at Surat pointed out the drain of silver from England, as an evil which must in some way be counteracted.<sup>2</sup> A rather acrimonious correspondence followed, in which Kerridge, Chief of the factory at Surat, showed plainly that he thought such views unsound if not absurd. In fact, the English factors, in defending the export of silver from England, took up the same line of argument as was adopted five years later by Thomas Mun in his famous "Discourse of Trade from England unto the East Indies (1621)." We thus see that the earlier theory of the drain had its critics as well as its advocates. Whatever, then, be the force of the arguments advanced by the exponents and the apologists of the present theory of the drain from India, let us not forget the fact that for well-nigh eighteen centuries India has been a veritable sink of the precious metals.

---

<sup>1</sup> *English Factories in India, 1651-54*, pp. 299-300.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters Received*, Vol. IV, pp. 325-6.

**Discussion.**—Professor Rushbrook Williams thought sufficient attention had not been paid to the importance of the Dutch records in connection with the history of Gujarat. The doings of the Dutch would throw considerable light on the subject-matter dealt with in the paper. He came across a very important document in the Library of Bikaner State. It was a private notebook by the Head Factor of the Dutch Factory at Ahmadabad, 1658-9. Till it was shown to him its identity had not been properly discovered. He had taken steps to have the notebook published.

Professor Sarkar remarked that Gujarat was more fortunate in historical records than any other province of India. The history of Gujarat, especially its economic and trade history, could very well be reconstructed on the basis of Sanskrit and Pali inscriptions, Jain works, the Greek *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, besides formal histories like the *Mirat-i-Sikandari* and the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, as well as the English records of the Surat factory.

---

The author had prepared a paper which he was unable to read owing to his unavoidable absence. His paper is printed *in extenso* below.

### A Note on Marathi Historical Records and their Publication.

(By Rao Bahadur D. B. Parasnis.)

I consider it a great privilege and honour that I should have been invited to meet the learned members of the Indian Historical Records Commission assembled this afternoon in this historic Hall of Bombay and to place before them a few words about the humble efforts that I have made in the field of Maratha Historical Research. In 1905 a similar opportunity was offered to me when the Centenary of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was celebrated with great eclat. On that occasion I briefly surveyed the work done during the century by eminent European and Indian scholars and noted the landmarks in the progress of Maratha Historical Literature. It is, therefore, in a way appropriate that I should place before you the actual results that I have been able to achieve in bringing to light the materials of Maratha History that were up to now hidden in darkness and not known to the student. During this period of fifteen years, remarkable activity and enthusiasm have been shown by European and Indian scholars in the collection and publication of historical materials. Many Historical Research Societies, such as the Punjab Historical Society, the United Provinces Historical Society, Mysore Mythic Society, Bihar and Orissa Research Society, the Bhandarkar Institute and the Bharata-Itihasa-Mandala of Poona, have sprung up to diffuse the knowledge of ancient and modern History. The nature and scope of the work undertaken by these Societies may be different, but it proves beyond doubt the wide awakening that has taken place all over India in the field of History and Archaeology. The objects of these learned bodies are varied and not confined to one language or one province, but have spread over



Bengal and the Punjab, Assam and the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, Gujarat and Maharashtra, the Carnatic and Mysore, Madras and Hyderabad, Tanjore and Travancore. It will be therefore presumptuous on my part even to think of comparing my humble labours with the brilliant work done by these learned bodies in various fields and different lores, but I only wish to place them before you as a drop in the ocean, with a view to giving an idea of the immense treasures that are yet to be explored.

Since the publication of Grant Duff's famous History of the Marathas in 1826 A.D. very few attempts were made to trace the original sources on which Grant Duff based his History. In 1867 Justice Newton, Dr Wilson, Rev. Taylor, and Rao Sahib Mandlik took considerable interest in this matter and held several discussions in the Bombay Asiatic Society on the subject. On one of these occasions Justice Newton made the following remarks :—

“ We had indeed in Grant Duff's invaluable History a work which in some respects left scarcely anything to be desired, but while we could not hope to add much to the result of his patient investigation and conscientious discrimination, and had little need to seek for confirmation of a narrative which had been amply tested during a long series of years through the practical researches and discussions incident to the administration of the Maratha territory, and had now taken the place of settled history ; it was still felt by many that the preservation of the interesting materials from which that admirable work had been produced was an object of very great importance. In no department of knowledge, perhaps, were we dependent so exclusively on a single authoritative work, and it might be feared that the recovery of the many records and the tracing again of the varied sources of information which have been so effectively used is every day becoming a matter of great difficulty.”

From these remarks it appears that in those days Grant Duff's work was considered to be an authority and the preservation of the interesting materials from which that admirable work had been produced, was deemed to be an object of very great importance. Mr Justice Newton with the help and support of Sir Bartle Frere, the then Governor of Bombay, strove hard to secure the original manuscripts of Grant Duff, but without any appreciable result. The Grant Duff Manuscripts were deposited with the Literary Society of Bombay in 1826, but since then they have disappeared. Justice Newton and afterwards Justice Telang caused search to be made for them, but could not find the manuscripts nor any clue to their whereabouts. This gave rise to a curious impression that they had been purposely destroyed by Grant Duff in order to suppress the true facts of Maratha History. This impression was expressed by Mr Kirtane in his “ Criticism of Grant Duff's History of the Marathas ” but it looked improbable and was afterwards withdrawn by him in his introduction to the ‘ Life of Shivaji ’ by Malhar Ramrao Chitnis. This controversy, however, served the purpose of creating a good deal of interest about Maratha History and a new band of scholars like Messrs Vishnu Krishna Chiplunkar and Kashinath Narayan Sane (now Rao Bahadur) came forward to collect and publish

the original Bakhars and papers relating to Maratha History. They started a new journal "Kavyetihas Saugraha" solely for this purpose and in course of a few years they brought out a number of valuable Bakhars which partly formed the basis of Grant Duff's work. Later on, Messrs Rajwade, Khare and others joined the field and continued the work of original research with vigour and zeal. The publication of the original papers by these gentlemen threw a flood of new light on the glorious and chivalrous deeds of the Marathas and exposed the one-sidedness and partiality of that eminent historian. This aroused the patriotic feelings of the educated young men and a number of new books on historical subjects were published in the light of this new material. The noteworthy contribution to the historical literature during this period was "The Rise of the Maratha Power" by the late Mr Justice Ranade whose unbounded love for Maratha History and ceaseless activity in this field drew me towards him and I feel proud to own that it was he who initiated me in this pious work of Historical Research. It will not be out of place if I mention here that not only did Indian scholars take a lively interest in Maratha History but European scholars too interested themselves in the study of this subject. Amongst them may be prominently mentioned the name of my friend the Hon'ble Mr Kincaid who undertook the most welcome and laudable task of revising and rewriting the history of the Marathas on the authority of newly discovered material and the first volume of this new work is already before the public.

The Peshwa's *Daftar* at Poona was considered to be the store-house of Maratha History and several attempts were made to secure access to it by the late Mr Justice Telang and Mr Justice Ranade in the times of Lord Reay. But the necessity and importance of historical research were less appreciated by some officials in those days who thought it advisable to withhold the Peshwa Records from the public eye. Later on, educational activity and increased taste for Oriental research gradually moved the Government of Bombay to take a more liberal and sympathetic attitude, and they, of their own accord, offered some facilities to students of established reputation like Dr Bhandarkar and Justice Ranade. It was in this connection that Justice Ranade wrote to me his first letter and asked me to undertake the work of examining the Peshwa's *Daftar* as a labour of love under the auspices of the D. V. T. Society. I readily consented to the proposal, and immediately permission was secured for me to see the historical portion of the *Daftar* which is known as the "Chitnisi papers." The inspection of these papers fully convinced me that the *Daftar* was arranged by persons who looked at the records more with an administrative than an historical interest. They therefore attached great value to a *sanad* or a *takidpatra*, but not an iota of it to the important communications from the battle-fields of Panipat or Kharda. Many interesting accounts and military despatches have been marked as 'useless' because of their containing descriptions of battles and skirmishes, and were thrown into waste-paper baskets. Something like two hundred bundles were awaiting destruction when I entered the *Daftar* and rescued them. Out of these I have selected ten thousand letters as of great historical value.

Unfortunately they are mixed up together and it is only with the skill and experience of a scholar that they can be deciphered and arranged. Besides the Chitnisi papers there are thousands of documents containing most valuable historical information, and I am glad to observe that Government have seen the necessity of making selections from them for various purposes. They have prepared the following volumes :—

10 vols.	. Peshwa's Diaries.
1 vol.	. Kaifiyats or Histories of the Deccan Sardars.
1 „	. Treaties, Agreements, and <i>Sanads</i> .
1 „	. Military <i>Saranjams</i> .
1 „	. Decisions.

These volumes no doubt form most useful material for an historian, though they lack interest for an ordinary reader. The other records in the *Daftar* have been well arranged from time to time in the old fashioned way, but as I had no opportunity to go through them, except for the sake of reference, it is difficult to form a correct estimate of their historical value. I may be allowed to observe that the Poona *Daftar* is a great mine of information and if devoted and diligent students are allowed to work there, there is every possibility of its bearing excellent results. There is a great necessity of an up-to-date index to the records, without which the research work cannot be carried on in a scientific method. With sufficient patience and means, the Peshwa's *Daftar* may be utilized to a useful purpose.

My own exertions in the Peshwa's *Daftar* did not, however, bear any appreciable results and my desire to trace the original papers on which Grant Duff founded his history remained unfulfilled. I, therefore, naturally turned my attention to searching private collections in the Deccan. There are scattered all over the country a number of old historical families whose ancestors flourished in the Maratha Kingdom and were distinguished for their valour and statesmanship. They have earned *Iname* or *Saranjams* as a reward for their loyal services, which their descendants are still enjoying. They ought to possess their old family records showing the valiant deeds of their illustrious ancestors. But unfortunately owing to ignorance, poverty, and fallen condition, few of them ever cared to preserve their family records which had in many cases perished by the rude hand of time or were devoured by insects. Some of them were also used for making *Tabuts* or copy books for children. Many records have found their way into a bania's or confectioner's shop only for a trifle and many more rot into decay. Such calamities having fallen on old records, it is not difficult to imagine how few must have survived. Yet, luckily, I was able to discover some valuable finds which had not yet seen the light of the day. They came from Maratha families of note, small or great, and consist of papers from a Persian *Sanad* from the King of Bedar to the voluminous correspondence of the battle of Kharda with the Nizam. One of these collections belongs to the great minister Nana Farnavis, and its genuineness is unquestionable. It is doubtful whether Grant Duff had seen any of these papers but a part of them was seen by his successor, General Briggs, who took away to

England about 7,000 letters with a view to writing a detailed biography of that great statesman, but none of these documents is forthcoming, though several inquiries were made at the Royal Asiatic Society of London and other places where he was said to have deposited his collections. Excluding this number and those that had already perished, I have been able to collect from various sources a large number of letters of first rate importance, dealing with the period 1770 to 1796 A.D., the best part of Nana's administration at Poona.

This collection possesses a twofold value inasmuch as it consists of letters and despatches of warriors and statesmen who actually made Maratha History and those written by Peshwa's Vakeels and Correspondents from different courts and places. The letters of Madhavrao I, Raghunathrao, Nana Farnavis, Sakharam Bapu, Haripant Phadke, Mahadji Shinde, Tukoji Holkar, Parasharam-Bhanu Patwardhan, Ali Bahadur, Anandrao Raste, and other notable persons fall in the first category, and the letters of Purshottam Mahadeo Hingne, Govindrao Kale, etc., fall in the second. Besides these there is a correspondence from Peshwa's representatives with the European powers, such as the English, the French, and the Portuguese, which is extremely valuable and rare. Very few persons know that the Marathas had their Vakeels at such distant places as Calcutta, Pondicherry and Goa. Lala Sevakram who was their Vakeel with Warren Hastings and Lord Cornwallis at Calcutta used to report to the Peshwa's minister all their movements. He has even described the duel fought between Warren Hastings and Francis in 1780. Janardan Shivram was their Vakeel at Pondicherry and his original letter written in English to Lord Macartney, Governor of Madras, is in my possession. He has written a most graphic account of the activities of the English and the French in Southern India, and his letters are as interesting as the Diaries of Ananda Ranga Pillai, Dupleix's *Dubash*, which are being translated and published by the Madras Government. Ranchod Krishna was the Peshwa's representative with the English at Bombay, and his letters about Governors Hornby, Boddam and Ramsay, are full of historical interest. With the Portuguese at Goa the Maratha Vakeel was Vithal Narayan Dhume, who brought about a friendly alliance between these two powers, and the letter sent by the Governor of Goa to the Peshwa through this man in 1774 is a valuable piece of historical relic which I possess. It will thus be seen that the information derived from this material will undoubtedly throw a new light on the Maratha connection with the European powers that played a conspicuous part in the making of Indian History.

Besides these documents, there is a voluminous correspondence relating to various subjects, such as the Maratha Army, Navy, Revenue, Justice, and other social and religious topics. There is a vast number of "Dincharyas" or daily accounts—which may be termed diaries in the modern sense of the word—that abound in extraordinary interest. There are graphic descriptions of several great persons and their daily actions in private and political life which enlighten us as to their mode of living, their manners, their morals, their character and their refinement. The *Dincharyas* or private diaries of Sawai Madhavrao, the Peshwa, or Sir

Charles Malet, the British Envoy at the Poona Court, are extraordinarily interesting in this respect. They give a true insight into the Poona society of the day and show the influence of European civilization on the Maratha Court. Sir Charles Malet not only gained popularity at the Poona Durbar, but introduced surgery, medicine, painting and other arts. He even sent for a watch-maker from Europe and presented microscopes, globes and telescopes to the Peshwa and his Sardars. The portraits of Nana Farnavis, Mahadji Shinde and other leading men of Poona sketched by Mr Wales, the English artist introduced by Sir Charles Malet at the Poona Court, are still in existence, and I possess a few of them with the original letters in which they are mentioned.

In fact, these papers when made available to the public would show the true character of the Maratha people and give a correct idea of their political and social advancement. General Briggs who had studied some of these papers very carefully was struck with the culture and civilization of the Marathas, and remarked that "the sentiments expressed in the letters of the conduct of the individuals by whom they were written exhibit a people who were not deficient in talent, nor were different in any respect from what might be expected from persons considerably elevated in the scale of human society." "Among the upper classes," he further added, "I have found refined notions of delicacy of conduct and manners, and among statesmen and financiers I have occasionally met with enlarged views of policy and a knowledge of the principles of statistics and political economy that would not disgrace the ministers of any Government." This will show the singular value and importance of these papers and prove the necessity of their early publication. But this is a work which necessitates much patience and energy and requires an amount of money to undertake it successfully.

The funds required for such purposes are not however so easily forthcoming in this country as in England, America, Germany and other countries. Nevertheless to make an humble beginning in this direction I started on my own responsibility in 1908 a magazine, "Itihas Sangraha," which received kind patronage from the Government of Sir George Clarke (now Lord Sydenham) who appreciated its necessity and usefulness. In his speech at the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society on the 1st March 1909, His Lordship, while lamenting the paucity of labourers in the field of historical, archæological and ethnological research, welcomed my attempt in the following words:—"Government have recently undertaken to subsidise a small periodical publishing documents having reference to the pre-British period. This is a small beginning, but I trust that it will encourage progress in research of this nature." The magazine ran regularly for seven years when its publication had to be suspended partly through want of sufficient funds and lack of support from the general public, and partly through the unexpected and sad death of the owner of the press which printed it; and it is feared that it may not be possible to resume its publication for some time to come on account of the terrible rise in the prices of paper and cost of printing unless the Government again think of offering their liberal support. During its short life of seven years this magazine published material covering about 4,000 pages, and it is for students of history to judge of the value of historical information thus made available.

Along with the collection of historical papers and manuscripts I also entertained an idea of collecting historical relics, paintings, maps, coins, etc., which aid to teach history, and perhaps better history. The most valuable and unique services rendered by Lord Curzon to the cause of archæology and historical research in India, and especially his masterly speech at the Asiatic Society of Bengal on the Historical Collection of the Victoria Memorial Hall awakened a sense of duty towards the past and served as a stimulus and guide to the enthusiastic workers in the field of research. India owes a deep debt of gratitude to the great Viceroy who tried to preserve her past glory with a sense of sacred duty and gave to Indian History the fascination which it exercises increasingly upon research students and workers both in India and Europe. With a view to facilitating the work of research in this part of the country I have founded at Satara a Historical Museum and Library out of my collection of old and rare manuscripts, valuable documents, books, pictures, maps, coins, etc., which I have collected at great personal expense and labour. I consider Satara to be the fittest place for such a purpose, as it is a quiet place for students to work in the field of historical research. Its climate is very cool and salubrious and does not affect the old Indian paintings or spoil the lustre of the illuminated manuscripts. Being the old capital of the Maratha Dynasty, Satara possesses a great historical interest and is naturally looked upon by all lovers of Maratha History as the proper place for preserving the historical records and relics of Maharashtra. It is in a way the birth-place of Maratha History, as Captain Grant Duff, the First Resident at Satara, wrote his monumental work here. For the present I have kept all my collection in my private bungalow, but it is absolutely necessary to have a suitable fire-proof building for housing the collection and a trained staff to do the work of copying and publishing the records. I therefore requested the Government of Bombay kindly to extend their liberal support to provide me with such a building as has been done in the case of the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library at Patna. To my great satisfaction the Government of Bombay were pleased to consider favourably my proposal and under certain conditions promised to grant my request. But as there are many obstacles in the way of good work, the Great War broke out in Europe and put a stop to the further development of my scheme. Nevertheless I maintained the Historical Museum at great sacrifice, which, I am proud to say, has become a great attraction to scholars and visitors alike. My learned friend, Professor Jadunath Sarkar, who is present here to-day on the Commission, was kind enough to pay a visit to Satara in 1916 and was pleased to term my Museum as "the Mecca of South Indian History." The other day another distinguished visitor, Dr Thomas of the India Office, who had specially come down to Satara to see my collection, paid a great compliment, and I may be excused if I read a line from his most flattering letter in which he says, "Your beautiful house is a mine of treasures and your very skilful and tasteful arrangement gives additional value to the collection. I am really astonished at the variety and multitude of the *chefs d'œuvre* which you have brought together. Your Museum is, I suppose, unsurpassed in artistic and historical interest by anything of the kind in India, and I envy you the enjoyment of living among such delights." Such an encomium coming from a distinguished scholar like Dr Thomas whose whole life has been spent

amidst the richest treasures of the India Office is indeed a sufficient testimony of the real value of the collection.

The work of unearthing and collecting materials of the Maratha History so far done is, comparatively, large and sufficiently encouraging. By the self-sacrifice, earnestness, and industry of several workers in this field a great mass of hitherto unpublished and unknown historical papers has come to light, but their editing leaves much to be desired. It ought to be done more scientifically and in the methods of historical research followed by Western Scholars. It is no doubt creditable to bring out old papers in any form, but it will be still more useful if they are published in a systematic and scholarly way, on the lines of 'The English Factory Records' or 'The Calendars of State Papers' in England. This will certainly require the assistance of scholars trained in the methods of Historical Research who are able to gather together or elucidate in introductions, notes, and indices, all the historical information obtainable from the documents to be edited or explored. This is a work which can only be achieved with pecuniary help from the public or the State, and in the absence of it, it is well-nigh impossible for isolated individuals to undertake it. I would therefore suggest that instead of publishing the full letters, it would be easier to publish summaries of the important documents in a chronological order which will save much labour and cost and would also facilitate the work of future research. The arrangements for publishing Persian correspondence made by the Government of India are exactly on these lines and I highly recommend them to those who are interested in this subject.

In this connection I deem it necessary to make one more suggestion, *viz.*, that in view of the fact that the History of the Marathas is in a way the History of a nation,—it includes the whole of India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin,—and as many other nationalities are also interested in its story, it is highly desirable that the summaries should be published in English. I may mention here in passing that a Parsi friend of mine who took considerable interest in Maratha History had often urged the necessity of publishing "The History of the Marathas as told by Maratha Historians or Chroniclers" just on the lines of Sir Henry Elliot and Professor Dowson's elaborate work on the Muhammadan History of India called "The History of India as told by its own Historians"; the project, however, being too ambitious and costly had to be dropped. But the recent publications "The Sources of Vijayanagar History" by Professor Krishna Swamy Aiyangar from Tamil and "The Life of Shiv Chhatrapati" by Professor Sen from Marathi have been successfully brought out on similar, but less ostentatious and more useful, lines by the Universities of Madras and Calcutta, and it is to be hoped that their example will be followed by the University of Bombay. There can be no doubt that similar publication of English summaries of original Marathi documents will certainly tend to popularize the cause of historical research.

The study and research of Marathi historical records could be rendered more interesting and easy to the student if some of the difficulties which often come in the way and hamper the work are removed. The first and foremost of them is the want of a Maratha Historical Dictionary, without which the study of old Marathi documents cannot be easily undertaken. The old Marathi papers contain a number of

Persian, Arabic, English, Portuguese and other foreign words, mostly in corrupt forms, and if there be no aid from such a dictionary it is very difficult to understand their true meaning. It is therefore necessary to prepare such a work on the lines of that famous Anglo-Indian glossary "Hobson-Jobson" by Yule and Burnell. I may mention here that on the occasion of the trial of Warren Hastings a special dictionary was prepared to give the correct meaning of many vernacular words in the evidence. Though the times are now changed and we are much advanced in the knowledge of Indian vernaculars, still there remains the same necessity for such a dictionary. I have with me some papers about the Maratha Navy at Vijayadurg which contain so many unknown naval terms that not a single dictionary in existence is able to give their meaning.

There is again a further necessity for a Maratha Biographical Dictionary to find out the names of persons who often confuse the student. In the Peshwa's *Daftar* there are some lists called "Vilhe Yadis" which might be utilised for this purpose. The manuscript accounts of Maratha Historical Families by General Briggs, the Jervis Manuscripts in the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society, Captain Clune's Sketches, the manuscript accounts of Maratha Sardars prepared by Raja Pratap Sing of Satara will all be useful for preparing such a work. "The Indian Biographical Dictionary" by Keene and "the Dictionary of Indian Biography" by Buckland are most valuable works for reference, but they contain very few Maratha historical names.

Lastly, I wish to add a word as regards the spirit in which the work of collecting, preserving and publishing the materials of Indian History—especially Maratha History—should be accomplished. It is not my object to define the duties of a historian nor to dilate on the scope and nature of history which is as wide and expansive as the human mind can conceive. But it is the ideal of duty which we should keep before our eyes and try to fulfil. The study of history, ancient and modern, must be inspired by the lofty sense of investigating truth, whatever it may be, in a conscientious spirit, regardless of any selfish motive or partiality or bias. Imbued with this spirit and genuine love for Oriental learning and knowledge, Western Scholars have placed India under a deep debt of gratitude by bringing to light her glorious past, her ancient civilization, and her greatness in the eyes of the whole world. In fact, the interest they have taken till now in Indian historical and antiquarian research is indeed unparalleled, and one who closely studies their stupendous work cannot but be struck with admiration for them. It is through their untiring zeal, wonderful energy, and unbounded interest that Indian literature has been so much enriched. The Government of India and other provincial Governments have also bestowed their earnest attention on this subject, and have contributed not a little to achieve this result. 'The Indian Text Series' and 'The Indian Records Series' are concrete examples of their earnest efforts in this direction, and their recent resolution on Indian Historical Records and the appointment of this very Commission are the direct outcome of their true spirit. Is it not therefore our first and foremost duty to appreciate and follow this spirit in hearty co-operation with Western Scholars and perform our duty to our nation and its sacred past, in the light and guidance of their example and precept? Indeed, too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the co-operation of European



scholars in this field; and in conclusion, I cannot help expressing my hearty agreement with the following observations of Mahamahopadhaya Haraprasad Shastri, the profound scholar and worthy President of the Bengal Asiatic Society:—  
 “Oriental study is one of the great platforms in which East and West meet with mutual admiration and mutual sympathy. The East is proud of the results of the Oriental studies, because they belong to the East. The West is proud because they have given a new significance to these studies and their result. The West is grateful to the East for revealing a great civilization that has passed away and in which they find so much to study and to reflect, and the East is grateful that they have got a new light from their old things. I wish this enthusiasm to last long and bring about the desired end.”

---

## **Proceedings of the Members' Meeting.**

At a meeting held on the 5th January the members discussed the special agenda which was prepared for their consideration. The decisions arrived at by the Commission are noted below.

### ***I. Deputation of three members of the Commission to visit the Indore State records.***

As there was no representative from the Indore State, the Commission decided that the question should be postponed.

### ***II. Preparation of provincial lists of European burial-grounds with inscriptions on tombs.***

The Commission decided to draw the attention of the Government of India to the importance of the preparation of correct lists of European burial-grounds with inscriptions on tombs. It was of opinion that the local Governments should be asked to appoint suitable editors to catalogue the various tombs and to edit the inscriptions and to report periodically their progress and to forward the same to the Government of India for the information of the Commission. The Commission further suggested that the assistance of Archdeacons would be useful in the preparation of such lists.

### ***III. Publication of Dodwell's monograph on the old Coast Army and the grant of an honorarium for it.***

After some discussion it was decided that it should be recommended to the Government of India that the Indian Historical Records Commission should bring out a series of monographs on subjects connected with Indian history on the lines of the Indian Records Series and the Indian Text Series; that Mr Dodwell's monograph should form the first volume of the series; that Lieutenant-Colonel Tod's manuscripts relating to the Pindaris discovered in the Central Provinces Record room, which <sup>is</sup> being edited by Mr C. U. Wills, should form the second volume of the series; and that the Central Provinces Government should be approached on this subject.

The Commission further decided that a Committee consisting of the following should be formed to settle details about the publication of the series :

Professor Jadunath Sarkar.

Mr H. Dodwell

Mr J. M. Mitra.

The Commission further recommended that an honorarium to be decided by the Government of India should be granted to Mr Dodwell for his monograph on the old Coast Army.

#### IV. The investigation and utilisation of the manuscript records of Portuguese India.

The following note by Professor Jadunath Sarkar on the Indo-Portuguese records was considered by the Commission :—

The records of the "heroic age" of the Portuguese connection with India, viz., the first century of exploration and conquest, are already available in print. They consist of the annals of De Barros (covering 1497—1539), Couto (1526—1600), Gaspar Correa (1497—1550) and Castanheda (1497—1540), the commentaries and letters of Affonso D'Albuquerque, and a few stray publications. But the raw materials for the history of Portuguese India during the 17th and 18th centuries are, with one exception, all unpublished. These consist of royal orders from "Home," despatches from the viceroys in India, official reports, journals of embassies, treaties, etc.

The archives of the General Secretariat, Goa, contain these documents bound in 192 volumes entitled *Livros das Monções*. Sixty-two other volumes of this work (covering the years 1605—1651, with a few stray documents reaching as far as 1699) were sent to Lisbon and are now preserved in the National Archives, Torre do Tombo. The contents of the first ten volumes and a part of the 11th volume of the latter, covering the years 1605—February 1618 have been published by order of the Academy of Sciences, Lisbon, under the direction of Bulhaõ Pato, in 4 volumes, entitled *Documentos Remettidos da India* (Lisbon, 1890—1893). The records for the years 1618—1651 have been neither printed nor indexed.

Of the 192 volumes of the *Livros das Monções* preserved in India, a very brief alphabetical index compiled by Tovar e Albuquerque in 1811 was printed by Dr Ismael Gracias at Goa in 1918 under the title of *Index Alfabético Chronológico e remissivo das Reaes ordens etc.* Some select documents from this collection have been printed in Goa in the *Boletim do Governo* (esp. 1873—76) and *Portugueses no Oriente* (4 vols). The papers relating to the 16th and even the 17th century are comparatively few, and many of them refer to the internal arrangements of the Portuguese Government and the local affairs (esp. ecclesiastical) of the dependency. But the collection is very rich for the 18th century and throws new light on Haidar Ali, the Rajah of Satara, the Peshwa and the Mughal empire. The documents in Marathi and Persian preserved in Goa have been neither indexed nor even reported on.

It would be a mistake to undervalue the Portuguese records of the 18th century on the ground that the Portuguese were a decadent power in India after the 16th century. We should bear in mind that there was a revival of energy and expansion of territory in Portuguese India about 1720—1740, and that up to 1770 the Portuguese had much more intimate connection with the indigenous Powers of the land, viz., the Adil Shah of Bijapur, the Mughal Emperor, the Maratha Rajahs of the House of Shivaji, the Savant of Vadi (called "Bounsulo" in the *Livros*), Haidar Ali and the Peshwas than the English had. The information on South Indian history that we can derive from Portuguese sources is necessary for

supplementing our English, Marathi and (decreasing) Persian records for the same period.

In view of the destructive influence of the climate of Malabar on paper and the political troubles through which Portugal has been passing of late, it would be a distinct gain to Indian history if (a) the Marathi records in Goa are examined and where historically important copied, (b) the Persian records indexed, and (c) the more important papers in Portuguese selected from the *Index Alfabetico*, calendared.

As regards (a), the work can be best done by giving a subsidy (say, Rs 600) to the Itihasa Mandala of Poona, which has a band of devoted workers and has already published a volume of private historical documents in Marathi collected in Goa territory.

As regards (c), I know a gentleman in Portuguese India who can calendar the Portuguese records.

---

It was resolved that the Government of India should be asked to grant a subsidy of Rs 600 to the Itihasa Mandala of Poona, to examine the Marathi records in Goa territory and to obtain copies of important documents, and also to compile a note on the extent and value of the Persian records. The note should be submitted to the Historical Records Commission for their information.

It was further decided that enquiries be made as to whether Mr R. S. White-way had left any manuscript materials as the result of his examination of the State records in Portugal.

#### ***V. The means of giving greater publicity to the nature and value of the records in the Imperial Record Department, Calcutta, and of attracting private researches on them.***

The Commission was of opinion that a discussion of the question was premature till a handbook of the contents of the Record Office was published.

#### ***VI. Printing up of records.***

The Commission was unable to lay down any general principle and was of opinion that the question of printing particular records should be discussed on their merits.

#### ***VII. The desirability of issuing a volume dealing with Circular letters, Codes (Civil) of Government, 1764-1800.***

The Commission endorsed the suggestion of Archdeacon Firminger that a volume dealing with Circular letters, Codes (Civil) of Government, 1764-1800, should be published for each of the Presidencies in order to obviate the necessity of

dealing with such documents in various publications of records, and suggested that this recommendation should be brought to the notice of the Provincial Governments.

### ***VIII. Contributing towards the preparation and publication of a history of the Jesuit Missions in Bengal.***

The following letter from Father Hosten to Archdeacon Firminger was considered :

This year, in January and February, thanks to a small grant allotted me by the Director of Public Instruction in 1914, I visited the old Portuguese Mission stations on the Dacca and Chittagong side in view of collecting data for a history of our Missions in Bengal, which was begun in 1911 and is to be published in 1921 in Belgium in 2 big volumes. I found little of importance in the course of my tour, but I have good hopes to be more successful on a visit to the archives of the Bishop of Mylapore and Pondicherry, Chandernagore depended on Pondicherry and the rest of our Bengal Missions depended on Mylapore from 1606 to 1836. A visit to those places is very urgent now, if our historian in Belgium is to be put in possession of further documents. We can hardly delay the publication of his work.

I have thought that, as this work is not purely ecclesiastical but will throw much light on the history of Bengal from 1576, these researches of mine might be of interest to the Commission for Indian History, which, if I remember well, you are one of the chief members of; that they might be viewed in the light of public service; in which case might I make bold to ask the Commission whether they could see their way to pay my tour of exploration, and give me travelling allowance?

I shall come down to Calcutta about the 12th of January next, and after a few days of research in the Imperial Records of Calcutta, I should start about the 20th of January; visit Madras, Mylapore, Pondicherry, and even Trichinopoly, in which latter place I am sure many important papers for the history of Chandernagore are to be found. All this would bring me to the end of February, when I must come back here for my professorial duties.

I should have stated that, owing to the depleted exchequer of the Mission since the war, the low rate of exchange of Belgium money, and the fact that my services here in the College are not repaid otherwise than by board and lodging, I have no funds of my own to fall back upon, and that I am loath to trouble the Superior of the Mission about expenses which the Mission is not accustomed to and would find hard to bear.

---

It was decided to recommend to the Government of India the grant to Father Hosten of his travelling expenses on the understanding that he submitted a paper on the result of his examination to the Indian Historical Records Commission at their next meeting.

### ***IX. Treatment of the manuscript records in Poona.***

After some discussions the following resolution was passed :—

The Commission strongly urges upon the Government of Bombay the importance of the scientific investigation of the contents of the Peshwa's *Daftar*, Poona, and recommends that the collection should be handlisted by competent scholars without further delay so that scientific students of Indian history during the 18th century may begin to utilise the collection without waiting for the records being calendared.

### ***X. Grant for the Commission.***

The following resolution was passed :—

The Commission is of opinion that it should be given powers within the limits of the Budget grant to sanction expenditure for specific purposes, such as, (a) grant of honorarium to editors, (b) travelling allowances to investigators of records, (c) subsidies to learned societies in investigating records on behalf of the Commission.

### ***XI. Arrangement for the next meeting.***

In view of the difficulties and disadvantages under which the Commission laboured at Bombay, the Commission was of opinion that arrangements for the holding of future meetings should be left in the hands of the permanent Secretary.



